UNESCO the Courier

PEOPLE AND PLACES
Circus flashbacks

PLANET
Forests: a hot deal for a cooler world

CONNEXIONS
International radio makes new waves

INTERVIEW
Wangari Muta Maathai, Kenya's green militant

UNESCO the Courier

December 1999

Memory: making peace with a violent past

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Memory: making peace with a violent past

The second half of this century has been stained by crimes against humanity. For the victims, the path of reconciliation winds between remembrance and forgetting. The complexities of this process are illustrated by stories on South Africa, Chile, Guatemala, Russia, Cambodia, Rwanda and Bosnia.

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Cover: Mi Lay massacre memorial, Da Nang, Viet Nam; © J.M. Huron/Editing, Paris

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e-mail: unesco.courier@unesco.org
Internet: http://www.unesco.org/courier

Director: René Lefort
Secretary, Director's Office/Braille editions:
Annie Brachet (Tel: (33) (0) 1. 45.68.47.15)

Editorial staff (Paris)
Editor in Chief: John Kohut
English edition: Roy Malkin
Spanish edition: Araceli Ortiz de Urbina
French edition: Martine Jacot

Ethirajan Anbarasan
Sophie Boukhari
Cynthia Guttman
Lucía Iglesias Kuntz
Asbel López
Amy Otchet

Translation
Miguel Labarca

Art and production unit: Georges Servat
Illustrations: Ariane Bailey (Tel: (33) (0) 1. 45.68.46.90)
Documentation: José Banaag (Tel: (33) (0) 1. 45.68.46.85)
Liaison with non-Headquarters editions and press:
Solange Belin (Tel: 33 (0) 1. 45.68. 46.87)
Administrative Assistant: Theresa Pinck
(Tel: (33) (0) 1 45.68.45.86)

Editorial Committee
René Lefort (moderator), Jérome Bindé, Milagros del Corral, Alcino Da Costa, Babacar Fall, Sue Williams

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Circulation and promotion
Fax: (33) (0) 1 45.68.57.45

Subscriptions and customer service
Michel Ravassard (Tel: (33) (0) 1. 45.68.45.91)
Sales and subscription agents
Mohamed Salal El Din (Tel: (33) (0) 1 45 68 49 19)
Stock management and shipping
Pham Van Dung (Tel: (33) (0) 1. 45.68.45.94)

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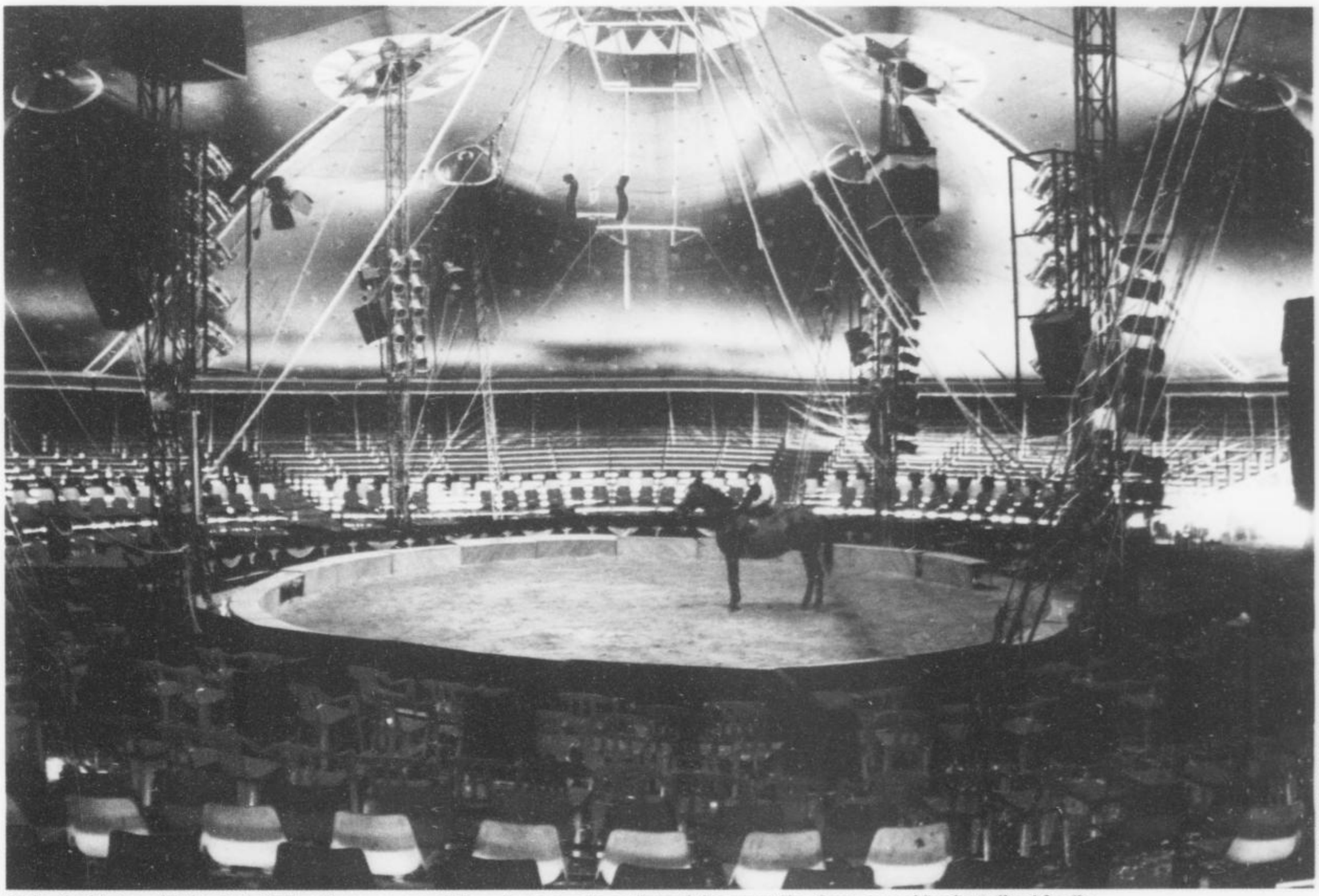
CIRCUS FLASHBACKS

Photos by Massimo Siragusa; text by Tonino Guerra

Massimo Siragusa's circus photos conjures up a world of happy memories for Italian poet Tonino Guerra, the scriptwriter of Federico Fellini's 1974 film *Amarcord* ('I Remember')



© Massimo Siragusa/Contrasto/Gamma, Paris

Under the big top of Italy's Embell Riva Circus, an equestrian act prepares to go through its paces. The circus, owned by the Bellucci family, tours mainly in southern Italy.

When autumn began and leaves from the chestnut trees covered the road between the station and the square, a moment would come when I would open the window overlooking our vegetable garden and see with delight the tent of the little circus which had been pitched on the village green overnight.

When I opened the same window in springtime, my surprise came from the cherry tree, bursting with white blossoms. I was a small boy then, full of excitement at discovering the big top which had gone up in front of our house. The evening air was filled with the sounds of trumpets and the rumble of drums.

It was usually the same circus that Federico Fellini had applauded before me in Rimini, the chief town of the Adriatic Riviera, near the village where I was born—Santarcangelo di Romagna. I remember how Fellini and I often talked about it during the shooting of *Amarcord*, the film in which he remembered his youth in Rimini.

By then, both of us had been living in Rome for many years. On Sunday mornings, Fellini would often drive me to Cinecittà[1]. He just loved to be there when it was deserted and quiet. He would ask for the keys to Set no. 5 and we would make our way to that dank, empty place.

Let the show begin!

As soon as we arrived, he would say in a voice charged with emotion: "Let the show begin!" and would start to switch on the lights one by one. We watched the

1. The centre of the Italian film industry, founded 62 years ago on the Via Tuscolana just outside Rome.

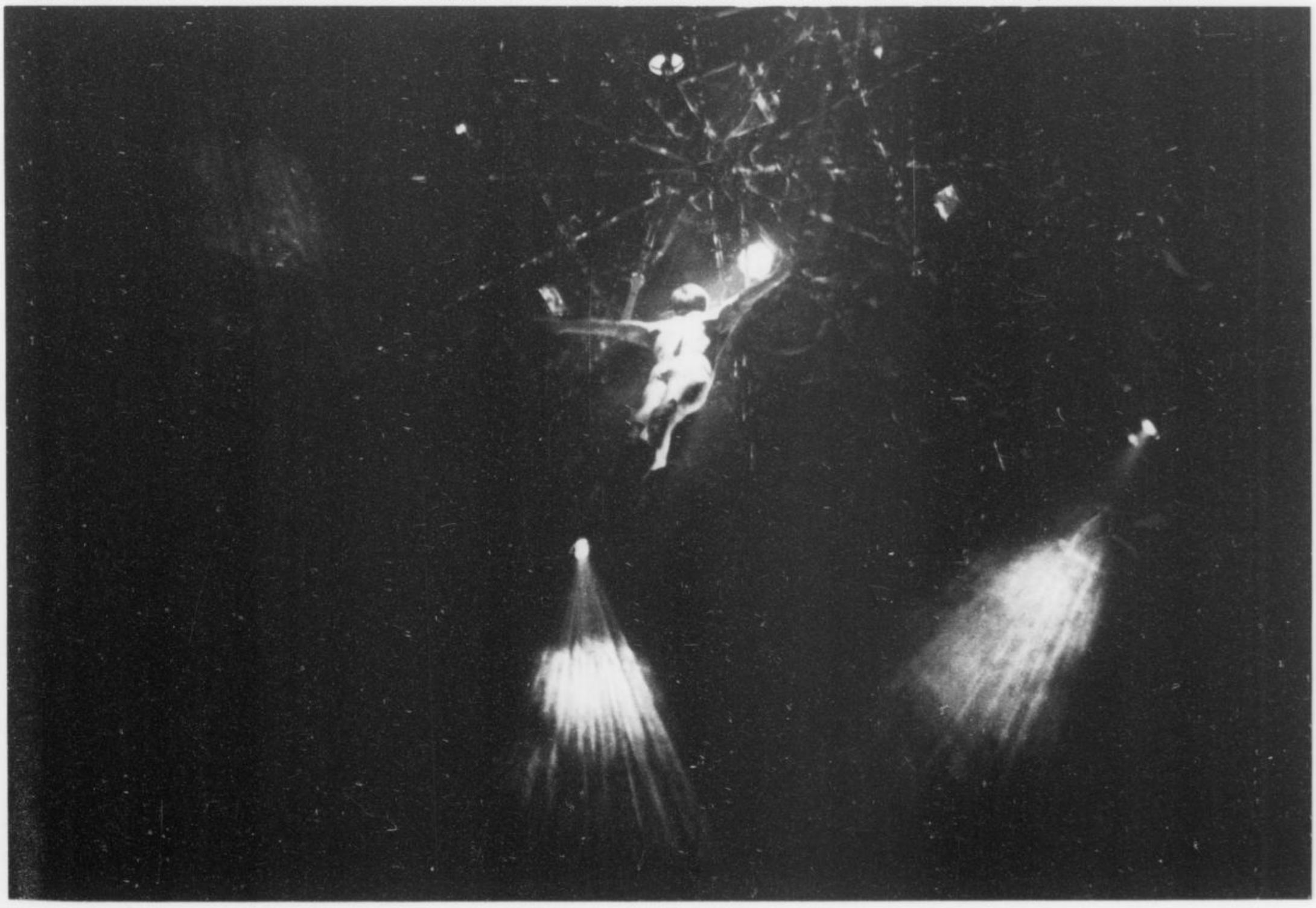
This lanky giraffe is one of many performing animals in the Moira Orfei Circus. The Orfeis are a famous Italian circus family.

A lonesome clown looks into a mirror before going into the ring.

Photos © Massimo Siragusa/Contrasto/Gamma, Paris

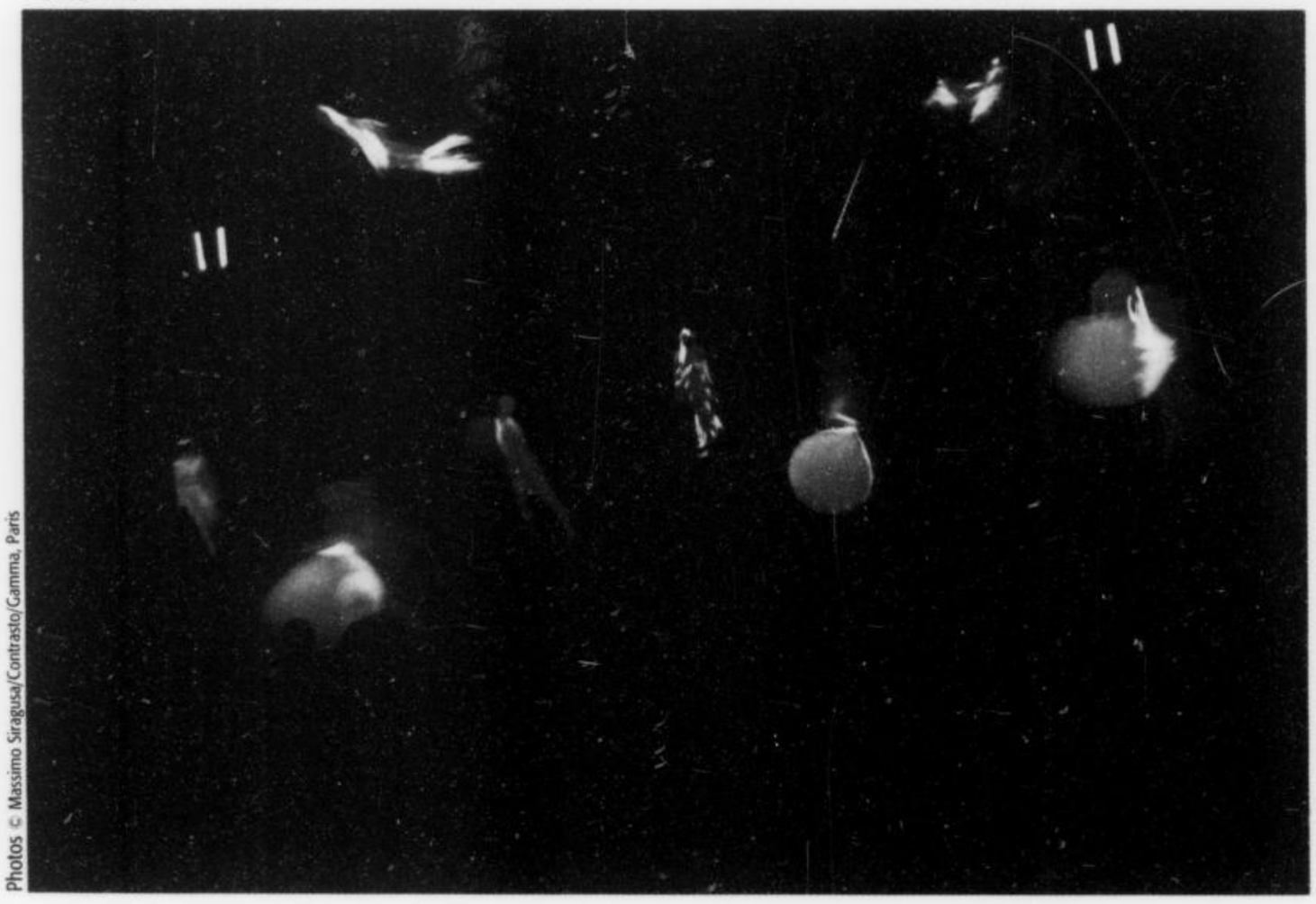
The spotlight picks out spinning hoops and silhouettes a high-stepping dancer during a Rome performance of the Togni family's three-ring American Circus.

A tightrope walker with the Roncalli Circus treads the high wire in Vienna (Austria). The Roncalli is a German circus, but most of its performers are Italian.



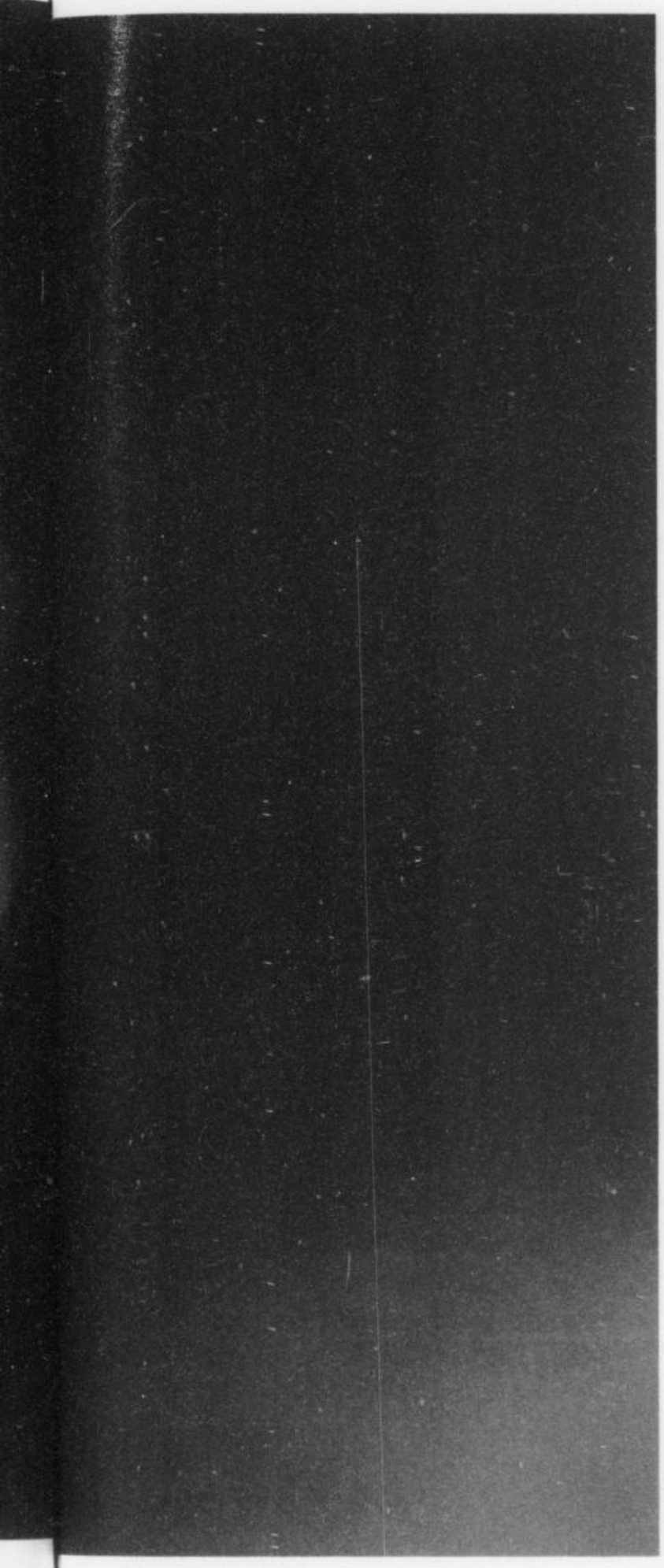
Acrobats caught by the camera in mid-air during a performance by Livio Togni's Circus in Palermo.

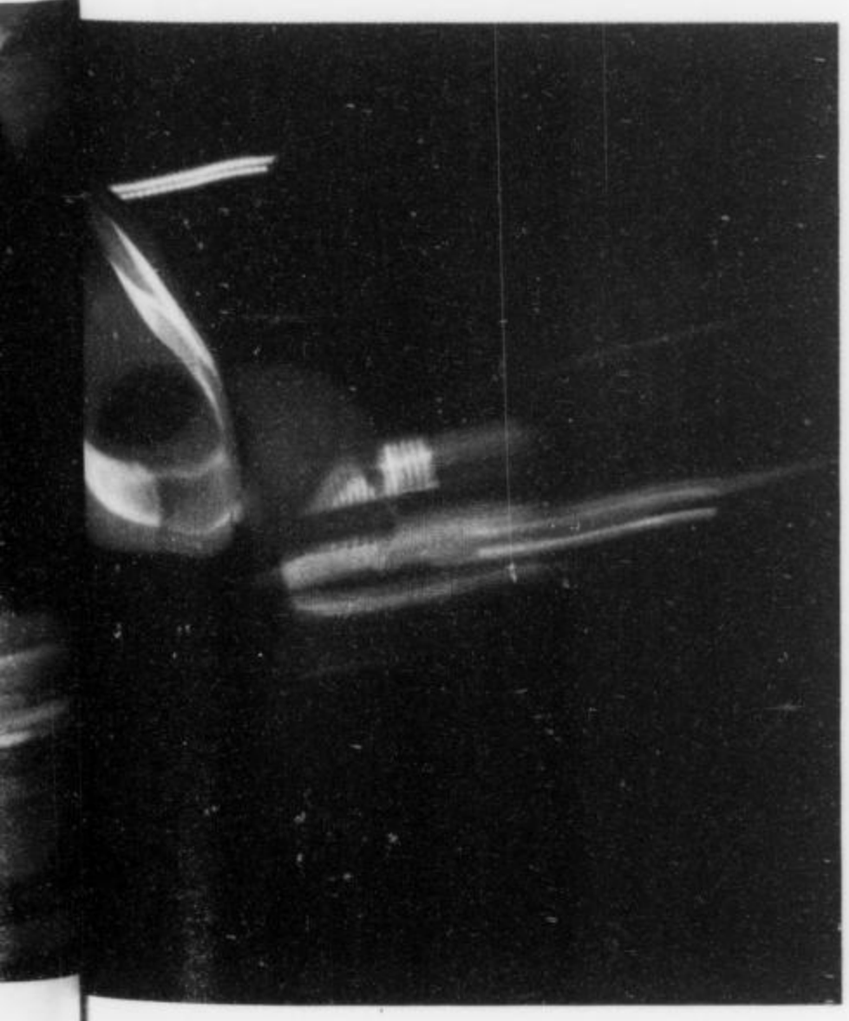
Flying trapeze artists of the American Circus.



An elephant arrayed in a fluorescent costume.

Photos © Massimo Siragusa/Contrasto/Gamma, Paris





► fuzzy glow from the dusty bulbs dotted all around the huge drab area, and the sounds and images of shows we had seen as children came flooding back.

On days when the circus was in town, even my mother Penelope joined in the fun. Every morning, she would ask the keeper of the African animals for the droppings of the giraffes and the old lion, and would use them to work wonders on the flowers she grew in old saucepans.

The beautiful photos by Massimo Siragusa which illustrate this scrapbook of golden memories take me back to those childhood days as well as my long visits with the prodigious Fellini to Set no. 5 (one of 16) at Cinecittà. For him this set was the real Via Veneto, the Via Veneto of *La Dolce Vita*. Set no. 5 served as the backdrop when the coffin with the great director's body was displayed to the public for the last time on November 1, 1993.

These memories also take me back to Russia, one of the countries I've loved most, and bring to mind the time when I worked for the director Andrei Khryanovsky. A few years ago, I gave him the script of a cartoon story called *The Grey-Bearded Lion*. A film was recently made of it which tells the story of a little circus whose main attraction is an unusual lion called Amedeo, or Teo to his friends. As the years go by and he gets older, divisions grow among the small family of circus folk.

The great Popov

I also remember, like so many coloured bubbles, the times when I met the great Russian clowns, especially Karandash, who was so short that when he stood behind a table, he seemed to be sitting at it.

And Popov, the great Popov who performed his finest routine one day when he was in Amsterdam. He entered the ring and prepared to eat a meal in a small spotlight which lit up part of the ground. When he finished, he gathered up the light with his hands, as if it were breadcrumbs, a trick he'd worked out with the lighting technician. Just as he was leaving the ring, he put the light in a shopping bag. He received so much applause that he stopped and threw the bag towards the audience, which was then flooded with light.

I can't forget either the statues that Ilario Fioravanti, an old sculptor from Cesena, shaped with hesitant child-like hands. In Pennabilli (the village in the Marches region of Italy between Pesaro and Urbina where I've lived for the past decade), he assembled all the statues which reminded him of the circus and circus life. They are still in the rooms of an old palazzo in the heart of the ancient village, the Bargello. In cells which once held prisoners, Fioravanti's statues now stand as if waiting for a round of applause that might break out at any moment, applause suspended in mid-air.

There's something irresistible about this world that floods my memory with joy but also fills me with melancholy—the last notes of the music we heard in the village as the circus caravans prepared to leave and then went on their way. The sounds trailed away in the fog and became a kind of poignant lament that, standing on the tips of our toes, we strained to hear until the very last note.

Afterwards, we would gather on the patch of ground where the circus ring had been. Sometimes we'd plant candles and create a ring of light around us. ■

POET, STORY-TELLER AND SCRIPTWRITER

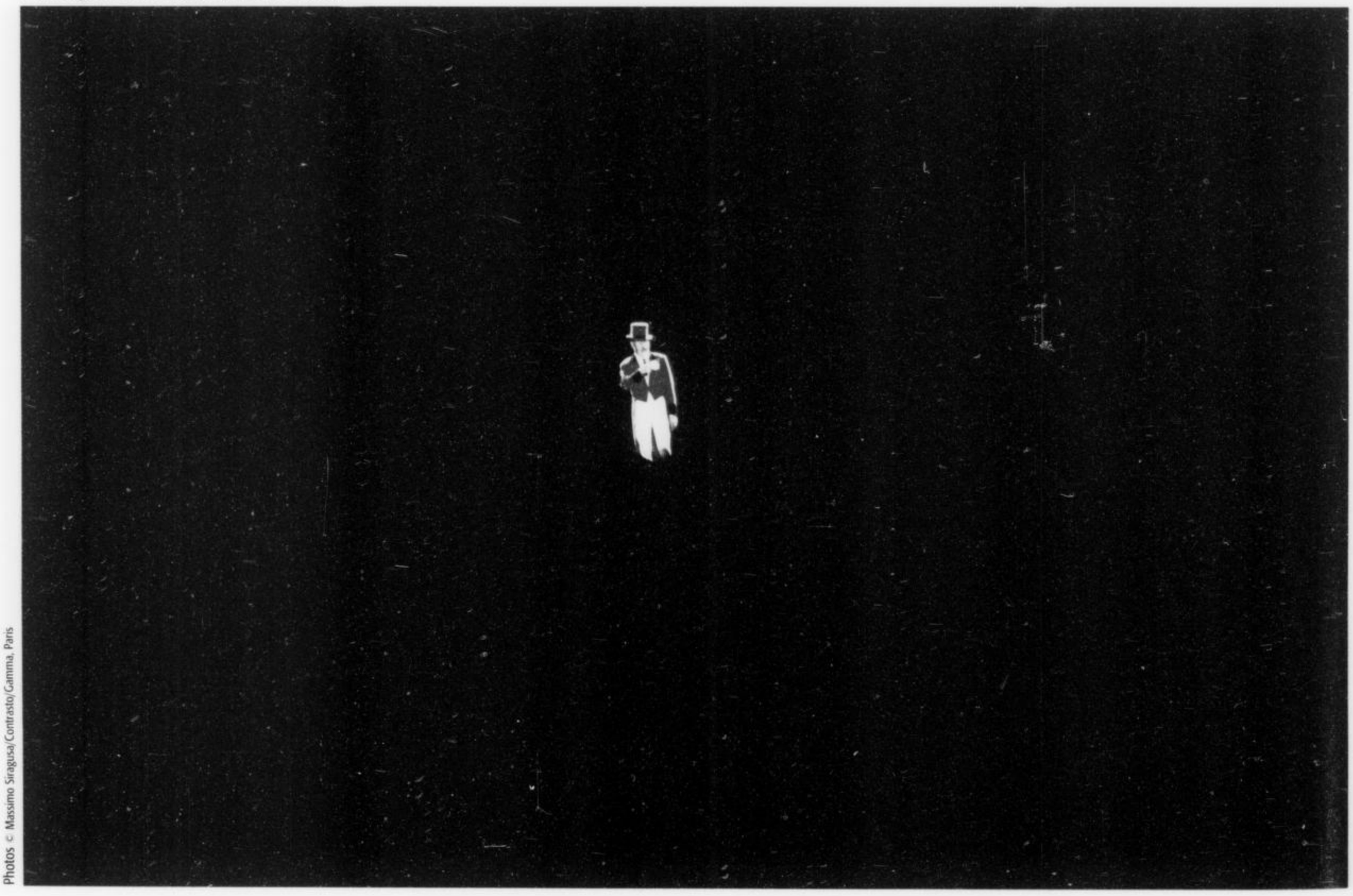
The Italian poet Tonino Guerra, who was born in Santarcangelo di Romagna in 1923, graduated in education studies from the University of Urbina and is a world-famous scriptwriter. He has written over 100 screenplays, which have been made into films by directors including Michelangelo Antonioni (with whom he has just written *L'Aquilone*, an illustrated story for the third millennium, published by Editoriale Delfi, Cassina, Milan), Andrei Tarkovsky, the Taviani brothers, Federico Fellini, Francesco Rosi and Vittorio de Sica.

Some of his poems and short stories have been translated into English, French, German, Dutch and Spanish. Of one poem, *Honey*, the great Italian writer Italo Calvino has said: "Tonino Guerra turns everything into fiction and poetry—via the spoken word, writing or film, in Italian or in the Emilio-Romagna dialect. We should all learn his dialect so we can read these wonderful stories in their original language." ■

To contact Tonino Guerra, write by e-mail to <delfi@pointest.com>

An elephant of the Embell Riva Circus gives its trainer a ride.

The ringmaster of the Moira Orfei Circus.



Photos © Massimo Siragusa/Contrasto/Gamma, Paris

INTO ACTION

© Viviane Froger, Paris

Koïchiro Matsuura

Koïchiro Matsuura, who was born in Tokyo in 1937, studied law at the University of Tokyo and economics at Haverford College (Pennsylvania, U.S.A.). In 1959, he began his career at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he has served as Director-General of the Economic Co-operation Bureau (1988-1990); Director-General of the North American Affairs Bureau (1990-1992); Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (1992-1994), in which post he oversaw Japan's hosting of the First Tokyo International Conference on African Development; and since 1994 as Ambassador to France, Andorra and Djibouti. He also served for one year, until November 1999, as chairperson of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee. On November 12, UNESCO's supreme ruling body, the General Conference grouping 188 Member States, confirmed the choice made by the Executive Board on 12 November and appointed Mr Matsuura to the post of Director-General of UNESCO.

UNESCO is a factor of hope, because it is the one international organization which, through all its programmes, respects and defends what is of universal worth and dignity in the material and spiritual heritage of all cultures, and thereby, the absolute dignity of all human beings. . . .

Globalization is accelerating with dramatic speed, presenting a global challenge which demands a global answer. Yet the response must be made with all due respect for cultural diversity and identity, for that priceless individual component that makes up the true dignity of our many peoples.

But UNESCO can only go on providing the world with such hope, and such defence, if it proves itself to be an adequate world instrument. UNESCO is not an end in itself. UNESCO is a world service, a tool which is at once delicate, highly complex, and precious. Humanity may all the better avail itself of such a tool if all the world's states—and peoples—agree once again to make proper use of it, and so contribute to its efficiency and universality. UNESCO must once more represent the whole world, with no exceptions. I pledge to do my best, in the course of my stewardship, to persuade those who stand outside to return or to join.

But criticisms, not all of them unfair, have been leveled against this great instrument: and failings, where verified, must be made good. The purpose of sound management is, again, not an end in itself, but a duty to ensure that our institution fully discharges its great task as a true world service, responsible and accountable to the world—and to the world's taxpayers.

Our resources are therefore not unlimited, nor should we spread ourselves too thin. I propose that we streamline our activities within the limits of our budgets, and closely focus upon those programmes which are our true mandate—not for the sake of fashionable austerity, but in order to make a real impact where best we may, and where truly we must, provide our needed service: in our ongoing war against poverty, through education and the nurturing of human resources.

I suggest pursuit of our most practically conceived programmes, in co-operation with leading institutions, scientists and scholars around the world, in terms of our four great directives, on behalf of education, science, culture, and communication.

UNESCO is a challenging paradox. It cannot lapse into a mere club for intellectuals, but it must serve as a forum for international intellectual exchange. It cannot pretend to be a research institution but must keep abreast of and stimulate research. It is not an operational agency, yet it must see that global ethics for peace, justice and solidarity, through international co-operation in education, science, culture and communication, are both morally observed and tangibly applied. Finally, UNESCO is not a funding agency, although it must provide catalytic funds to generate further funding: in order to demonstrate that ideals only take shape through action. . . .

In the whirl of this changing age, let us stand firm and faithful to our enduring purpose: building peace in the minds of men. ■

(Extracts from an address given by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura in Paris on 15 November, on the occasion of his investiture as Director-General of UNESCO.)

FORESTS: A HOT DEAL FOR A COOLER WORLD

Sophie Boukhari

Forests can play a key role in combating the greenhouse effect but current proposals for using them raise a thicket of thorny issues

Why are industrialists so keen on trees these days? After the Japanese vehicle-maker Toyota (see page 13) and others, the French car firm Peugeot launched a huge reforestation project in late 1999. The result will be 10 million trees growing on 12,000 deforested hectares in the heart of the Brazilian Amazon.

The aim of the $10 million project, says Peugeot chief Jean-Martin Folz, is to "make the idea of a carbon sink a reality." In other words, to show that reducing consumption of fossil fuels—gas, oil and coal—is not the only way to fight global warming. By using the ability of vegetation to absorb and store carbon dioxide (CO_2), the main greenhouse gas, the amount of CO_2 in the atmosphere can be reduced.

Tropical forests: a controversial role

Through the process of photosynthesis a growing tree gives off oxygen and absorbs water, light and CO_2, which is why expanding forests are what is known as "carbon sinks". Full-grown forests on the other hand cease to be carbon sinks and become carbon reservoirs. They store huge amounts of carbon above and below ground and play a neutral role in the CO_2 equation. The carbon dioxide given off when old trees decompose can be offset by that which is absorbed when young trees grow in their place. And when forests burn, they give off CO_2 and become sources of carbon. That is the theory. In practice, however, very little is known about the global carbon cycle and the role of forests in it.

It is also unclear how forests will react to global warming. "There are uncertainties regarding the implications of increased CO_2 concentration in the atmosphere for photosynthesis, forest growth rates and changes in carbon stocks in forests," says Indian scientist N.H. Ravindranath, one of the three co-ordinators of a special report on forests produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Today's carbon sink can become a source of CO_2 tomorrow.

According to currently available data, the world's main forest carbon sinks are in the countries of the North (the United States, Canada, Europe and Russia). After centuries of deforestation, mainly to create farmland, these regions have been gaining trees again in the past 100 years or so. As a result of the revolution in intensive agriculture, less land is needed for farming.

On the other hand, large-scale deforestation is still taking place in tropical countries where land hunger is constantly increasing (see box opposite page). This contributes to the increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The role of tropical forests in this context is highly controversial. In theory, as mature forests they should absorb as much CO_2 as they give out. But recent studies suggest they actually absorb more CO_2 than was thought. In fact, says Youba Sokona, deputy director of Enda Tiers Monde, a non-governmental organization, "we have no clear idea of the state of forest resources or the way they behave in developing countries." Forest surveys are very expensive, and not many have been done in the countries of the South. The estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have sometimes been questioned.

Carbon credits

Despite all these unknown factors, the notion of carbon sinks has become highly topical—for political rather than scientific reasons. It came of age in 1997, when it was introduced into articles 3.3 and 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change.

Many reforestation projects are underway in Brazil, but deforestation is still gaining ground. According to Greenpeace, 80 per cent of the felling is illegal.

© Anders Gunnartz/Lineair, Arnhem

UNESCO Courier journalist

© Fred Hoogervorst/Panos pictures, London

Women carry seedlings into a wooded area as part of a forest rehabilitation project in Tanzania.

Under the protocol, which was the result of tough negotiations in the wake of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the industrialized countries promised to reduce their annual net emissions of greenhouse gases by an average 5 per cent a year until 2008-2012, using the 1990 level as a base. To do this, some countries, notably the United States, insisted on the establishment of three "flexibility mechanisms".

The first involves setting up a market where the rich countries will bargain with each other to buy and sell emission permits. The second is a "joint implementation" (JI) arrangement under which they will earn carbon credits in exchange for funding reduction of emissions in formerly communist eastern Europe through, for example, industrial cleanup projects. The third is a "clean development mechanism" (CDM), which is like JI but operates between industrialized and developing countries. Many environmentalists have sharply criticized this "international trading in hot air" and accuse the countries that are the worst polluters of seeking to shirk their obligation to thoroughly revamp their own energy consumption practices.

Including the carbon sink idea in the Kyoto Protocol is another way of making the Protocol's application more "flexible". Article 3.3 says that "direct human-induced land use change and forestry activities, limited to afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990" can be used by states parties to meet their commitments. For example, a company may fund a reforestation project in its own country, or else a country like The Netherlands, say, could sponsor tree plantations in Poland. In 2008-2012, the amount of CO_2 these trees have absorbed or "sequestrated" will be calculated and counted as part of such countries' reduction in their own greenhouse gases.

Article 3.4 adds, without going into specifics, that other human activities relating to carbon sources and sinks can be taken into account. "These articles are last-minute compromises," says Michel Raquet of Greenpeace Europe. "They were drafted without much idea of their implications or whether everyone agreed on the meaning of the terms used. In fact, they vary from one institute or country to ▶

© Anders Gunnartz/Lineair, Arnhem

DEFORESTATION GATHERS SPEED

Over the last 150 years, says the World Resources Institute (WRI), deforestation and changes in land use have been responsible for 30 per cent of the increase in greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere.

At present, according to FAO, CO_2 emissions from these sources, especially in the tropics, represent a fifth of the world's carbon dioxide emissions resulting from human activity. Forest clearance to create farmland or pasture is a big part of this. In the 1990s, Brazil emitted 27 times more CO_2 because of deforestation than from fossil fuel combustion, according to Biomass Users Network, a non-governmental organization.

"Wood is usually burned on the spot because it's not worth keeping it," says French forestry expert Arthur Riedacker. "It's also too expensive to move. In Congo, it costs $130 a cubic metre to bring timber out of the forest to the coast, while pine wood or spruce only fetches $50 a cubic metre in France."

The WRI says that if nothing is done, deforestation could account for 15 per cent of the CO_2 in the atmosphere by 2050, with the rest mainly due to industrial pollution. Most of it will come from the Amazon region. After 2050, deforestation will decline because there will not be many forests left. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change calculates that 73 per cent of the world's tropical forests will have been felled by the year 2100. ■

© Rajendra Shaw-Christian Aid/Still Pictures, London

Villagers water seedlings at a tree nursery in India.

another." Future negotiations will sort this out.

These talks will also try to decide—this will be a far-reaching debate—whether or not to include carbon sinks in the CDM. If they are included, rich countries will be able to fund afforestation or anti-deforestation projects in poor countries as a way of obtaining carbon credits, instead of carrying out often more costly schemes at home to curb emissions from industry or transport.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the scientific organ of the 1992 Convention, thinks that carbon sinks can play an important role. As the FAO report notes, "IPCC has estimated, with a medium level of confidence, that globally, carbon sequestration from reduced deforestation, forest regeneration and increased development of plantations and agro-forestry between 1995 and 2050 could amount to 12 to 15 per cent of fossil fuel carbon emissions over the same period."

Arthur Riedacker, a French expert involved in the IPCC's work, also points out that such schemes produce biomass and timber, so reducing fossil fuel consumption. Biomass is a renewable energy source. Wood can replace plastic or concrete, whose manufacture uses hydrocarbons. But Ashley Mattoon of the Worldwatch Institute says the trade-off in carbon sinks may be "a major loophole [in the Protocol] which admits vast quantities of fossil carbon into the skies" and "encourages types of forestry that aren't very good for forests."

Questionable gains

To head off these dangers, everyone agrees the carbon sink idea should be very closely examined and tightly regulated. The IPCC, which will report back in 2000, will have to be more precise about the meaning of the terms "afforestation", "reforestation" and "deforestation" in article 3.3 so as to prevent abusive practices developing. For example, the text currently says a country can chop down an old forest and replace it by one of fast-growing trees, notes Greenpeace expert Bill Hare. The felling would not be counted in the country's emissions but the reforestation would earn carbon credits. So the country involved would gain, but not the atmosphere or the environment, because an old forest and its soil contain more carbon, which would be released by the felling, than a managed forest ever will. Biodiversity would also suffer.

Another problem would arise if Japan, say, were to fund a forest protection project in Malaysia. In return, it would ask for carbon credits equal to the emissions which the felling of the forest would have produced. But how can we be sure that the protection project is actually responsible for preventing the forest from being destroyed? And what is the point of protecting, say, a stretch of African savannah if the local population can simply chop down trees further away?

For the moment, the world is roughly divided into three camps about the issue of carbon sinks. One consists of several rich countries (including the U.S., New Zealand and Australia) that want a broad definition and flexible use of carbon credits. In some countries, like New Zealand, carbon sequestration from tree plantations covers a very high percentage of their greenhouse gas emissions. If they are unrestrictedly taken into account in 2008-2015, they will allow such countries to meet their commitments without taking any steps in areas such as industry, transport and human settlements.

In the U.S., which has pledged to cut its emissions by 7 per cent over the next 10 years, the carbon sink mechanism is being used to persuade Congress to drop its refusal to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, says Mattoon. The Clinton administration argues that the sinks "could comprise a significant portion of the country's total required emissions reductions."

A recent article in *New Scientist* magazine said Washington is even pressing for article 3.4 to be amended to include

waste from wood products in the definition of a carbon sink. It is certainly better to bury paper and wood waste in the ground than to burn it and release more CO_2 into the atmosphere. But how far is this going to go? "The spirit of Kyoto demands that we should focus on things that produce fewer greenhouse gases, which means encouraging energy-saving, transport reform and improved industrial processes and housing, with improvements in forestry practices as an extra," says Riedacker.

Conflicting interests

A second group includes European countries which take a cautious stand and are waiting for the IPCC report before making up their minds. The third group is mostly made up of poor countries, which are divided on the issue, says Ravindranath. "They're interested in development, not so much in carbon," says ENDA's Sokona, who is a member of the IPCC working party.

Everyone has different wishes and constraints as far as development goes. India, China and the countries of southeast Asia, which have competitive industries, seem opposed to introducing forestry projects into the CDM. They would prefer the rich countries to invest in them via industrial projects, which would include more technology transfers. But some Latin American countries, such as Costa Rica, are basing their development on eco-tourism, so they have an interest in improving their forests.

Africa, where half of all greenhouse gas emissions are caused by deforestation, is hesitating because in a continent where food security is still the top priority, people fear farmland will be lost if trees are planted. But Africa's weak industrial base means it will probably not benefit much from the CDM if forestry projects are not included in it. So some experts are in favour of it under certain conditions.

"Protected parks don't interest us," says Sokona. "They mean moving people off land without giving them anything in return. It's too easy for rich countries to come and plant trees in our countries, put a fence round them and earn carbon credits. However, I'm in favour of agroforestry, which meets our needs."

Few countries have taken a clear stand so far. Others are still making their calculations and trying to work out their position. The real battle over the world's forests will come after May 2000, when the IPCC will make its report. ■

TOYOTA MAKES TREES

◗ Yoshinori Takahashi

© Toyota Motor Corporation, Japan

Right, a tree seedling whose chromosomes have been doubled. It will grow into a tree with greater efficiency at absorbing toxic gases than the ordinary specimen, left, of the same species.

Industrialists can no longer ignore the effects of their activity on the environment. In a world which is more and more polluted and threatened by global warming, their reputation and future depend on doing something about it.

The Japanese vehicle-maker Toyota has understood this since the end of the 1980s. It launched its "Toyota Forest" programme in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, with the goal of using biotechnology to turn trees into anti-pollution agents.

Today Toyota is proud of its experimental forests, including Foresta Hills, half an hour by car from the company's headquarters. The firm is trying to revive *satoyama*, which are ancient protected hills on the edge of populated areas. They are a source of wood and prized items like *matsutake* mushrooms and *urushi*, Japanese lacquer.

"In this forest, we're developing the same activities our ancestors did in the 19th century," says Yasuhiko Komatsu, the project's chief. "We want to create *satoyama* for the 21st century." The giant company's engineers say they are trying to reduce vehicle emissions but cannot get rid of them completely. So other solutions have to be found–by using trees.

At Foresta Hills, the effect of different kinds of trees on the level of carbon dioxide in the air can be measured. In some places it is 10 to 20 times lower than in others. The most "effective" trees are those which grow quickly, stand up to difficult surroundings and resist diseases and insects, so these are the ones biologists want to learn how to cultivate. Increasing the number of chromosomes of some trees has boosted their ability to absorb toxic gases by a third.

Toyota is also researching into how to speed up the growth of trees in very acidic soil with a view to the reforestation of southeast Asia, which has been devastated by deforestation. Recently, the company began organizing reforestation activities outside Japan, and in August 1998 joined with paper manufacturers to set up the firm of Australian Afforestation Pty. Over the next decade, 5,000 fast-growing, drought-resistant eucalyptus trees will be planted in Australia, later to be chopped down and made into paper.

Toyota's work has drawn criticism however. Environmentalists are worried about the effects on the environment of genetically-modified species. Others argue that the main priority in fighting the greenhouse effect is to reduce emissions of pollutants and cut back on motor traffic.

"The car-makers are planting trees to give themselves a nice green image while hoping their vehicle sales don't drop," says Michel Raquet of Greenpeace Europe. "What will they get in return? Carbon credits, even though there is no scientific guarantee that their forestry projects will have any effect on the atmosphere."

"One of these days," says Ashley Mattoon of Worldwatch Institute, "we will have to ask ourselves how much more time, energy and money should be spent on tinkering with nature and satisfying our dependence on fossil fuels." ■

◗ Tokyo-based journalist

SPARE THE ROD, SAVE THE CHILD

Ethirajan Anbarasan

The widespread use of corporal punishment in Kenyan schools has led to increasing dropout rates and in a few cases, to death

When Justus Omanga, a fourth grade student at Mobamba Secondary School in Kenya's Kisii district, repeatedly denied allegations that he had brought a girl into the school compound one night last August, his teachers became furious.

Four of the teachers kicked, hit and beat Omanga so hard with a huge stick that the boy fell unconscious. A month later he died in hospital as a result of severe damage to his kidneys and other internal injuries, according to family members.

Omanga's case is not isolated. According to the Kenyan media corporal punishment has led to the deaths of at least six students in the last four years. While caning is a regular feature in schools, some students have suffered serious injuries which include "bruises and cuts, broken bones, knocked-out teeth and internal bleeding," says a recent report from the New York-based non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) titled *Spare the Child: Corporal Punishment in Kenyan Schools*.

An incentive to violence and revenge

Kenya is not the only country in the world that still practises corporal punishment. Indeed, only 70 countries, beginning with Sweden in 1979, have banned the practice. But experts say Kenya is one of the worst offenders when it comes to violence stemming from corporal punishment. "In Kenya corporal punishment against children in schools has reached dangerously high levels," says Yodon Thonden, a Tibetan-American who led the five-member research team which prepared the HRW report.

Apart from the brutality which is often, in Kenya at least, associated with the practice, corporal punishment in itself can provoke anger in its victims, leading to resentment and low-self esteem. It can also encourage violence and revenge as solutions to problems, experts say.

Moreover, child rights activists contend that corporal punishment goes against the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which affirms the child's need for care and protection. Article 19 of the convention, which has been ratified by 191 countries including Kenya, specifies that states must take appropriate measures to protect children from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation."

The HRW report, based on a field study, including scores of interviews with students, teachers, parents and officials, says that Kenyan children are often punished for petty offences like coming late to school or wearing a torn uniform.

'Some students told us that they dropped out of school because of severe beating by their teachers. This is in clear violation of children's right to education'

The problem has dire implications for basic education. A recent study shows that the enrolment rate in primary schools is fast declining and only 42 per cent of those enrolled in first grade complete the primary school cycle. The decline is, among other reasons, due to poverty and a hostile learning environment, say analysts.

"Some students told us that they dropped out of school because of severe beating by their teachers. This is in clear violation of children's right to education," says Thonden.

"So far no teacher has been convicted for these deaths," says Jemimah Mwakisha, a journalist who has written extensively on the subject in Kenya's leading newspaper *Daily Nation*.

Neither are teachers commonly sentenced for inflicting serious injuries. Victims often come from rural areas, where people don't have the finances to hire a lawyer and where legal aid is poor. In some instances where teachers have been taken to court, they have gone unpunished, as it has been difficult to prove a motive in the killing as required under the criminal law, Mwakisha says.

Parents scared to speak out

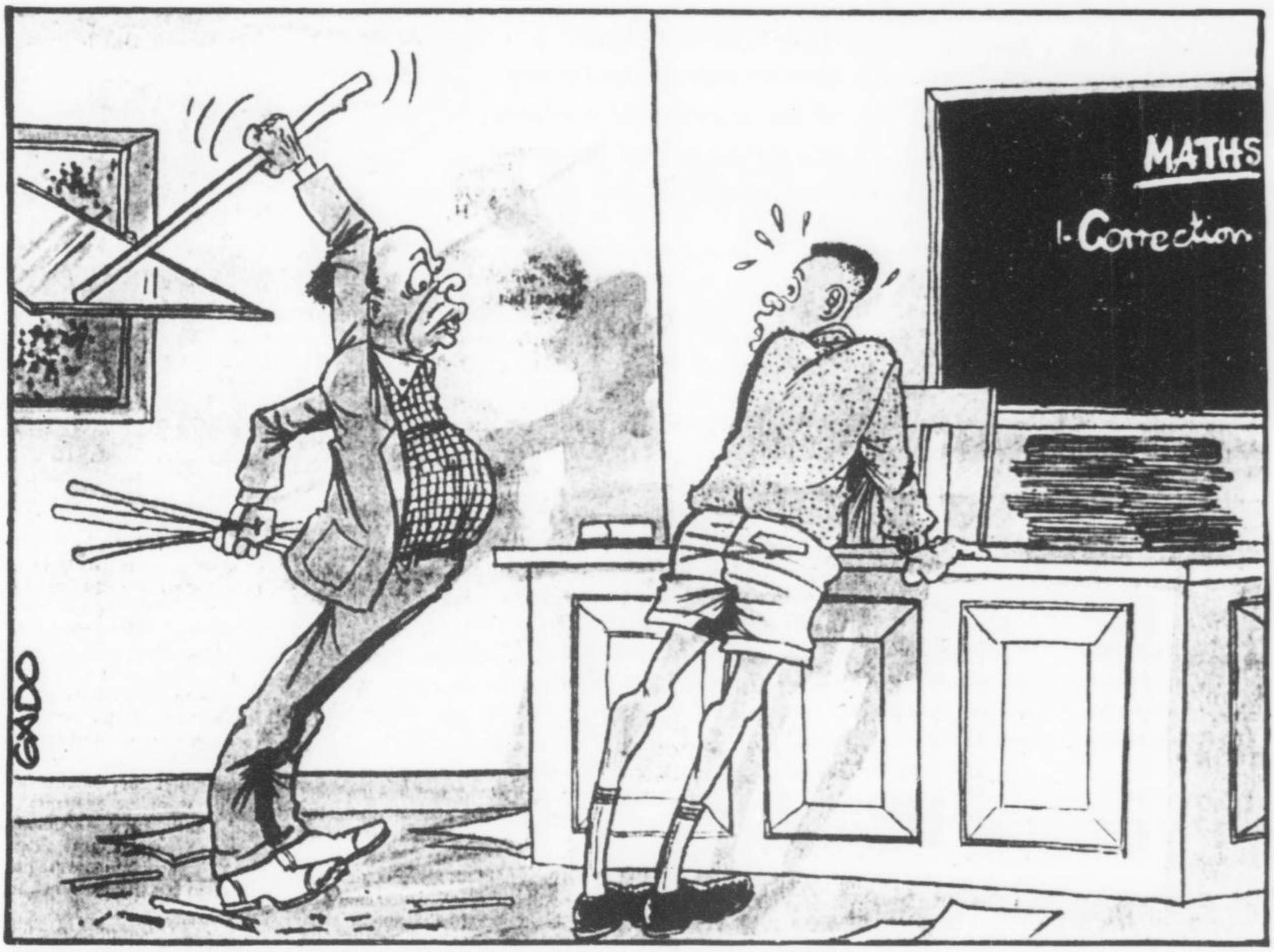
Excessively harsh corporal punishment tends to be particularly common in the countryside. "In rural areas, parents don't formally object to their children being beaten for fear they [the children] might be victimized further," says Mwakisha.

In public, Kenyan education ministry officials have strongly denied the HRW allegations, stating that some isolated incidents in rural schools have been exaggerated. However, in private, a senior education ministry official admits that the report was "more or less correct." He says teachers "brutally beat children in many schools without any proper reason. This is a practice that can only be stopped by abolishing corporal punishment altogether."

Nevertheless the recent deaths and the report have triggered a debate in Kenya on banning corporal punishment, as other African countries including Namibia, Burkina Faso, South Africa and Ethiopia have done in recent years.

According to government regulations, corporal punishment may be inflicted only in cases of continued or grave neglect of work, lying, bullying and gross insubordination. The beating, with a cane no more than half an inch thick, can be given only by or in the presence of a head teacher. Regulations state that boys should be hit on the backside and girls on the palm of the hand. Students are not supposed to get more than

Unesco Courier journalist



© Gado/The Nation, Nairobi

"The best method of teaching mathematics?" A cartoon published in *Daily Nation*, a leading Kenya newspaper.

six strokes as punishment and a written record of all the proceedings should be kept.

"The rules are hardly followed. Teachers use clubs, bamboo canes, sometimes even a rubber whip to beat the students," says Thonden.

For many teachers, a tool to cope with big classes

A strong constituency of Kenyan teachers is in favour of retaining corporal punishment, even though they concede more restrictions are required. A few years ago when the Director of Education tried to make the practice illegal, the teachers' union said it would not recognize such a ban.

Many teachers argue that without corporal punishment the schools would descend into chaos and that children would become even more unruly by the time they reached high school. In fact, they believe that in the long run corporal punishment means less rather than more violence. "Western countries give excessive freedom to their children. Look at the violent incidents in many schools in the United States," says Lawrence Kahindi Majali, Assistant Secretary General of the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT).

Many Kenyan teachers also contend that corporal punishment is one of the few disciplinary tools available given large class sizes. According to a government report there are 5,718,700 students and 192,000 teachers at primary school level, giving a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:31. In many schools classes of 50-60 students are common.

'When we were under British rule, those who refused to pay taxes or those who did not obey the rules were caned in public. The use of the cane was a symbol of authority and the legacy continues'

The burden is heaviest in rural areas where retired and transferred teachers' posts are often left vacant. As a result, authorities frequently combine two or three schools in a region, putting additional pressure on the existing teaching staff.

Teachers also try to justify corporal punishment by citing Kenya's long tradition. "When we were under British rule, those who refused to pay taxes or those who did not obey the rules were caned in public. The use of the cane was a symbol of authority and the legacy continues," says Majali.

Many teachers admit that they often carry out corporal punishment without the presence of the headmaster. In violation of the rules, the students are sometimes beaten all over the body, and often records of corporal punishment are not kept in schools.

Stephen P, a fifth grade student in Moi primary school in Nairobi, says teachers cane him or slap him regularly. His offences include coming late to school and not paying school fees on time. Elizabeth Z, who is in the fourth standard, says teachers slap her and pinch her on the cheeks for not doing homework.

"My children were not treated well by the teachers after I complained about caning by their class teacher," says Deborah N, a mother of two living in Nairobi.

Teachers are also afraid. They quote a growing number of instances in which ▸

▶ teachers have been attacked by students. In one extreme case, a class prefect was killed by students in the town of Nyeri, near Nairobi, early this year for being too strict with them.

The fact that corporal punishment leads so often to brutality may be symptomatic of the pressures facing the whole teaching profession. Teachers' salaries—ranging from 4,000 Kenyan shillings ($60) to about 15,000 ($200) a month—are among the lowest in the civil service. Teachers seem to take their frustrations out on their students, say experts. "Low salaries reduce teacher morale, and many of the lowest-paid teachers are forced to find housing in slum areas," says the HRW report.

Mounting tension

Education ministry officials say guidance counsellors in secondary schools encourage teachers to adopt methods to deal with depressed or problem students and thus avoid tensions leading to corporal punishment.

'Low salaries reduce teacher morale, and many of the lowest-paid teachers are forced to find housing in slum areas'

The counsellor discusses with the concerned student why he or she committed an offence and tries to find solutions. But officials admit that there are not enough counsellors in schools due to financial constraints and even those who have been posted as counsellors undertake other responsibilities due to shortage of staff.

Teachers in favour of reducing corporal punishment feel that the best place for introducing alternative disciplinary methods is the Teacher Training Programmes. At present teachers say that they hardly spend more than four to five hours on classroom management during their initial two-year training period for primary school.

Realizing the gravity of the problem, many non-governmental organizations have now joined the campaign to abolish corporal punishment and have started working with teachers to minimize its use until the law is changed.

"Until a legal sanction is obtained, we decided it would be better to work with the teachers," says Jacqueline Anam-Mogeni, child rights adviser at the Netherlands Development Organization (NDO).

The Nairobi-based NDO organizes workshops and training programmes to help teachers to get to grips with their problems and encourage them to use counselling methods and other forms of punishment, such as manual work.

Alternative solutions

NDO selects a group of teachers and volunteers from other non-governmental organizations from a particular region where corporal punishment incidents are high, and organizes workshops exposing them to human rights and child rights issues. After a week's training, the teachers go back to their schools and return for evaluation every three months.

"We first ask the participants how they treat their own children at home. Once they realize there is a problem they themselves come up with alternative solutions," says Mogeni.

The first session attracted 24 participants from different parts of Kenya. Some teachers say their attitude towards children has changed after participating in the course.

"Before I went for the child rights training, I always viewed the punishment as part of the learning process. Now I work with the pupils almost at a level of partnership," says Esther Nyakio Ngugi, a teacher at Kirigiti Girls Approved school in Kiambu.

Teachers who participated in the programme say they have realized that they were basically driving away students from schools due to constant beatings.

"This is only a beginning. We need more government and public support till we finally abolish corporal punishment," says Mogeni. ■

'Before I went for the child rights training, I always viewed the punishment as part of the learning process. Now I work with the pupils almost at a level of partnership'

HEAVY HANDED TREATMENT

Corporal punishment is legal not only in Kenya, but also in a number of other east African countries, including Tanzania, Sudan and Somalia. Governments complain that there are not enough resources and trained personnel to reduce the size of big classes, which some teachers find difficult to manage without corporal punishment.

In Tanzania, a few students have reportedly died after severe corporal punishment in schools. Many teachers do not like using this form of punishment but they "think it is the easiest way to manage big classes," says Dale Chandler, Executive Director of Kuleana, a Centre for Children's Rights based in Tanzania.

Kuleana works with other NGOs in the region to raise awareness among teachers and parents of the negative aspects of corporal punishment. Chandler says the campaign aims to drive home the point that if you mistreat children they tend to disobey rules when they become adults.

A legal ban on corporal punishment in schools has not improved matters in Ethiopia. "Students continue to be beaten by teachers despite the ban enforced in 1988," says Tibebu Bogaie, programme co-ordinator of "Swedish Save the Children", an NGO based in Addis Ababa. The organization, which published a report on corporal punishment in Ethiopia early this year, is campaigning against the practice in schools as well as in homes.

In Sudan, teachers say schools run by missionaries in the south organize guidance and counselling programmes for students to identify reasons for their misbehaviour. But they warn that ever growing classes might force them to switch to corporal punishment to deal with indiscipline.

However, experts disagree with the view that indiscipline can be tackled only by corporal punishment. Peter Newell, co-ordinator of EPOCH-Worldwide, an NGO campaigning against corporal punishment, says that in countries where the practice was banned decades ago "schools are not falling apart due to indiscipline. Beating can't be an excuse for lack of resources. It is a fundamental breach of human rights." ■

Useful websites
http://www.unicef.org
http://www.stophitting.com
http://www.freethechildren.org

For more information on child rights and corporal punishment
EPOCH-Worldwide
77, Holloway Road, London N7 8JZ
Telephone: 00-44-171-700 0627
Fax: 00-44-171-700 1105
E-mail: epoch-worldwide@mcrl.poptel.org.uk

FOCUS

Memory: making peace with a violent past

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Interview with Louise Arbour by Martine Jacot

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As much of the world has its eyes fixed, at the turn of the millennium, on the future, this Focus section, in contrast, looks back at the past. How, it asks, have nations that endured atrocities in the second half of this century come to terms with their ordeal? What obstacles have lain in their path? Between remembrance and forgetting, how can they make peace with the past and build the foundations for a better future?

In a scene-setting article, Tzvetan Todorov explains why we ought to remember the past but not endlessly rake over it. Rosalina Tuyuc from Guatemala develops this idea and insists that the first step to reconciliation involves knowing who to forgive.

The ways in which societies react to terrible experiences are shaped by their history, the forces that propel them forward or hold them back. Post-apartheid South Africa made a new departure, as Njabulo Ndebele points out, when it brokered a deal offering amnesty in return for truth. But although this may have helped to ease the reconciliation process, some victims protest that freedom should not be bought by confessing to a crime. In Chile, Oscar Godoy notes that amnesty for crimes committed under the dictatorship has smoothed the transition to democracy, but, say Fabiola Letelier and Victor Espinoza, it has not softened grim memories.

In Russia, the work of memory is incomplete. In Cambodia it is to a large extent blocked, laments film-maker Rithy Panh, and in Rwanda it is impossible, according to Benjamin Sehene. A similar situation exists in Bosnia.

Finally, Canadian jurist Louise Arbour hopes that the increasingly long arm of international law, by establishing irrefutable facts, can at least prevent the past from being mythologized and may even prevent crimes against humanity.

The evil that men do...

Tzvetan Todorov

The collective memory must be free to come to terms with grief and shape a better future

"We must draw a veil over all the horrors of the past," said Winston Churchill not long after the end of the Second World War. Around the same time, the American philosopher George Santayana issued a warning, often repeated since, to the effect that "those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it." For those of us who have experienced the painful history of the 20th century, which of these two injunctions is the most useful? What should we do—forget or remember?

The two operations are contradictory in appearance only. Remembering is always, by definition, an interaction between forgetting (erasure) and complete preservation of the past—something that is virtually impossible. The Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges creates a character in his short story *Funes el memorioso* (*Funes the Memorious*) who remembers every detail of his life. It is a terrifying experience.

Memory selects from the past what seems important for the individual or for the community. It organizes this selection and imprints its values on it. Peoples prefer to remember the glorious pages of their history rather than shameful episodes, and individuals often try unsuccessfully to free themselves from the memory of a traumatic event.

How to live with painful memories

Why do we need to remember? Because the past is the very core of our individual or collective identity. If we do not have a sense of our own identity and the confirmation of our existence that it provides, we feel threatened and paralyzed. The need for an identity is thus quite legitimate. We have to know who we are and what group we belong to. But people, like groups, live among other people and other groups. And so it is not enough simply to say that everyone has the right to exist. We also have to consider how our exercise of this right affects the existence of others. In the public arena, not all reminders of the past are worthy ones, and those that encourage revenge are always suspect.

The victims of evil may, in their personal lives, be tempted to try to forget the experience completely, blotting out painful or humiliating memories. To a woman who has been raped, for example, or a child who has been the victim of incest, might it not be better to act as if these traumatic events never happened? We know from people's reactions that this is unwise, because such a blanket refusal to remember is dangerous. Repressed memories remain more alive than ever and give rise to severe neuroses. It is better to accept a distressing past than to deny or repress it. The important thing is not to go to the other extreme and endlessly brood over it, but to gradually distance oneself from it and neutralize it—in a sense to tame it.

This is how mourning functions in our lives. First we refuse to accept the loss we have experienced and we suffer terribly from the sudden absence of a loved one. Later, while never ceasing to love them, we give them a special status—they are neither absent nor present as they were before. A distancing process develops, and eases the pain.

An act of faith in the future

Communities are rarely tempted to try to forget completely evil events that have befallen them. Afro-Americans today do not seek to forget the trauma of slavery their ancestors suffered. The descendants of the people who were shot and burned to death in Oradour-sur-Glane[1] in 1944, do not want the crime to be forgotten. In fact they want to preserve the ruins of the village left by the event.

Here too, as in the case of individuals, it might be hoped that the barren alternatives of totally erasing the past or endlessly poring over it could be avoided. The suffering should be inscribed in the collective memory, but only so that it can increase our capacity to face the future. This is what pardons and amnesties are for. They are justified when crimes have been publicly admitted, not to make sure they are forgotten but to let bygones be bygones and give the present a new chance. Were Israelis and Palestinians not right when they met in Brussels in March 1998 and noted that "just to start talking to each other, we have to leave the past in the past"?

When Churchill called for for a veil to be drawn over past horrors, he was right in a sense, but his injunction must be qualified by all kinds of conditions. No one should prevent memory from being regained. Before we turn the page, said future Bulgarian president Jeliu Jelev after the fall of communism, we should first read it. And forgetting means very different things to evildoers and to their victims. For the latter, it is an act of generosity and faith in the future; for the

It seems unjust to ask victims to protect those who tormented them yesterday, and yet this is the responsibility they must now shoulder.

Bernard Kouchner, United Nations Special Representative for Kosovo

Mr Todorov, who was born in Bulgaria and has lived in France since 1963, is a director of studies at the French National Scientific Research Institute (CNRS). His books translated into English include *Morals of History* (University of Minnesota Press, 1995), *French Tragedy: Scenes of Civil War, Summer 1944* (Dartmouth College Press, 1996) and *Convergences: Inventories of the Present* (Harvard University Press, 1993).

1. A French village where the SS massacred 642 persons as a reprisal for attacks by the Resistance.

© Patrick Zachmann/Magnum, Paris

Portraits of people who disappeared under the Pinochet regime look out from a wall in Santiago de Chile's Humachuco Renca neighbourhood.

former it results from cowardice and refusal to accept responsibility.

Yet is remembering the past enough to prevent it from repeating itself, as Santayana seems to say? Far from it. In fact, the opposite usually happens. Today's aggressor finds justification for his actions in a past in which he was a victim. Serb nationalists have sought justification by looking very far back—to their military defeat by the Turks in Kosovo in the 14th century.

The French justified their belligerence in 1914 by referring to the injustice they had suffered in 1871. Hitler found reasons in the humiliating Treaty of Versailles at the end of the First World War to convince Germans to embark on the Second. And after the Second World War, the fact that the French had been victims of Nazi brutality did not prevent them—in many cases the same people who had joined the army after fighting in the resistance—from attacking and torturing civilians in Indochina and Algeria. Those who do not forget the past also run the risk of repeating it by reversing their role: there is nothing to stop a victim from later becoming an aggressor. The memory of the genocide which the Jews suffered is vivid in Israel, yet the Palestinians have in turn been victims of injustice.

A person or a community may need to appropriate the memory of a past hero or—more surprisingly—a victim as a way of asserting their right to exist. This serves their interests, but does not make them any more virtuous. It can in fact blind them to injustices they are responsible for in the present.

The limits of this kind of remembering, which emphasizes the roles of the hero and the victim, were illustrated during the ceremonies held in 1995 to mark the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the United States, people were only interested in recalling the heroic role of the U.S. in defeating Japanese militarism. In Japan, attention focused on the victims of the atomic bombs.

But there is a lot to be said for rising above one's own suffering and that of one's relatives and opening up to the suffering of others, and not claiming an exclusive right to the status of former victim. By the same token, accepting the wrongs we have done ourselves—even if they were not as serious as the wrongs done to us—can change us for the better.

The past has no rights of its own. It must serve the present, just as the duty to remember must serve the cause of justice. ■

Remember to forget!

Immanuel Kant, German philosopher (1724-1804)

Building blocks of international justice

War crimes presuppose combat between nations. Genocide and crimes against humanity, on the other hand, may be committed during conflicts within states. An international criminal court to try these offences is in the works.

There, at Auschwitz, something happened that could not previously have been imagined. There people touched the profound layer of solidarity between all those who have a human face, the essence of the relationship between man and man. . . . Auschwitz transformed the conditions of permanence in relations between human beings.

Jürgen Habermas, German sociologist (1929-)

Crimes against humanity

The first definition of these crimes was given in the Charter of the International Military Tribunal set up by the Allies to prosecute the major Nazi war criminals (the Nuremberg Tribunal) in 1945. It runs as follows: "murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated."

The United Nations Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity of 1968 added the following provision: "eviction by armed attack or occupation and inhuman acts resulting from the policy of apartheid, and the crime of genocide."

Genocide

This term coined by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-born American scholar, comes from the Greek word *genos* (race or tribe) and the Latin suffix *cide* (from *caedere*, to kill).

Regarded as the most serious crime against humanity, it was legally defined by the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, entered into force in 1951, and has so far been ratified by 130 states. Three major conditions for the identification of genocide (article 2) are:

1) The victims must belong to a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such. Political, economic or cultural groups (e.g. the victims of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia) are thus excluded.

2) The members of this group are killed or persecuted because of their membership of the group.

3) Genocide is a planned collective crime committed by those who hold state power, on their behalf or with their express or tacit consent.

Article 3 defines as punishable acts: genocide; conspiracy to commit genocide; direct and public incitement to commit genocide; an attempt to commit genocide; and complicity in genocide.

Article 4 stipulates that all persons committing genocide shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

The International Criminal Court (ICC)

The notion of an international penal tribunal is mentioned in the 1948 Genocide Convention. But it was not until 1998 that 120 countries (out of 160 participants) meeting in Rome adopted a statute for a permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) to sit in The Hague (Netherlands). The Court will be created when 60 states have ratified the treaty on its statutes, a process which should take two or three years.

The ICC will have (non-retroactive) jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, under certain conditions. Signatories have the opportunity not to recognize its jurisdiction over war crimes.

Ad hoc War Crimes Tribunals

The War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was set up by a resolution of the UN Security Council in May 1993. Based in The Hague, it is empowered to prosecute those charged with serious violations of international law on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

So far 91 persons have been charged (including Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic), 31 of whom are in custody. Sentences ranging from seven days to 20 years have been handed down to eight defendants. Four trials are currently being held.

The Tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha, Tanzania, was set up by the UN Security Council in November 1994. It has jurisdiction over the same crimes as the above, committed in Rwanda or neighbouring countries between January and December 1994.

So far, 48 persons have been charged, 38 of whom are in custody. Five defendants have been sentenced, including three to life imprisonment for genocide. Three trials are currently being held. ■

'We can't forgive until we have justice'

Interview with Rosalina Tuyuc

Rosalina Tuyuc has spent the past 17 years waiting. One night in June 1982, the Guatemalan army came and took her father away. "Francisco Tuyuc is dead," she was later told by the military, who never returned his body. Another night, in May 1985, they took away her husband, a peasant leader.

But Rosalina, a 43-year-old Kakchiquel Mayan Indian, was not deterred and in 1988 she founded the National Association of Guatemalan Widows (Conavigua), whose 15,000 members are today fighting to ensure the victims of the country's civil war are not forgotten. In 1995, Rosalina was elected to parliament as a deputy for the coalition of left-wing parties.

© EPA/ANP/Ed Oudenaarden/Afp.Paris

Can time ease the pain for those who have lost a loved one?

No, you never find peace from that. My children still ask me what's happened to their father and if he's coming home. We relatives of people who've disappeared are looking for our loved ones, and we don't find them, either dead or alive. Now that the state has admitted that abuses occurred, it has a moral duty to tell us where our dead are buried. Many of them were executed at military bases. In the name of reconciliation, the army must say where they are. Most people just want to give their spouses or children a Christian burial.

Have the aims of Conavigua changed since the peace agreement was signed in 1996 and the Historical Clarification Commission's report was published in February 1999?

The report confirmed we'd been right about the extent of the repression. Now we're fighting to get the peace accords applied and for Indian rights to be recognized. But we'll continue to seek compensation for victims of the war, to be told where the mass graves are and to bring impunity to an end.

What kind of compensation?

The government has launched a plan to compensate communities—by introducing electrification and building schools, roads and bridges—but it's forgotten the widows. We want direct individual compensation for the women themselves, including a psychological support programme, scholarships for their children and help in recovering their relatives' bodies from unmarked graves.

Can anything more be done to fight impunity?

Keep on trying those responsible. We don't want revenge, we want justice. We'd like to take matters to an international court because it's very hard in Guatemala to obtain justice. The trials are costly, they drag on for years and the results are not very credible. But we're going to bring to court at least a few of the 80,000 cases we've listed.

How do you balance the demands of the victims' families and political reality, which involves making concessions to safeguard the transition process?

Forgiving doesn't mean forgetting. First we need to know who to forgive. Many families don't know who killed their relatives. And if we don't manage to establish who was responsible, history may repeat itself. There's always the fear of a backlash from certain sectors but we can't forgive until we have justice.

Do the peace accords take the victims into account?

The agreements led to a "reconciliation law" which we regard as an amnesty. It doesn't apply to acts of genocide, kidnapping and torture. We voted against this law and we will oppose any other amnesty. The army and the guerrillas share responsibility for the war, though in different measure. It's normal that their leaders have made peace with one another, but in the villages, families are not even speaking to each other. There, reconciliation will take a long time. ■

Interview by Maite Rico, Guatemalan journalist

Many things
are torn away
that I wished
to keep for ever,
and the tearing will,
I know, bring
misfortune, greater
than the span of
a human life.

Franz Kafka, Czech writer (1883-1924)

Timeline

1954: The CIA overthrows the left-wing government of President Jacobo Arbenz, ushering in a series of military coups and upheavals.
1962: The first guerrilla groups appear.
1981-83: The height of the civil war. The four rebel groups combine to form the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG).
1986: Election of the first civilian president for 16 years, Vinicio Cerezo.
1991: Start of peace negotiations between the URNG and the government.
1996: Signature of peace agreements on "the rights and identity of indigenous peoples", in December under UN auspices.
1999: The Historical Clarification Commission publishes, in February, a report called "Remembering silence". It estimates that more than 200,000 people disappeared or were killed between 1962 and 1996, and blames the army for 93% of the 626 massacres it says took place. ■

South Africa: quandaries of compromise

Njabulo S. Ndebele

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up to offer amnesty in exchange for disclosure of events in the apartheid years. How successful has it been?

In his book *Tomorrow is Another Country*, South African journalist Allister Sparks describes how Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), and the apartheid government of South Africa were forced to recognize the need for a negotiated settlement. In a crucial meeting between the ANC and the right-wing generals of the South African armed forces, Mandela declared:

" 'If you want to go to war, I must be honest and admit that we cannot stand up to you on the battlefield. We don't have the resources. It will be a long and bitter struggle, many people will die and the country may be reduced to ashes. But you must remember two things. You cannot win because of our numbers: you cannot kill us all. And you cannot win because of the international community. They will rally to our support and they will stand with us.' General Viljoen was forced to agree. The two men looked at each other . . . [and] faced the truth of their mutual dependency."

This declaration, and its acceptance by everyone at that meeting, illustrates one of the major factors that led to the foundation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1995 (see box). The basis of any compromise is that contending parties display a willingness to give up irreconcilable goals, and then enter into an agreement that yields substantial benefits to all parties. The apartheid government of South Africa desired to continue to hold on to the reins of power, but was willing to allow for increased political participation by blacks. The liberation movement, on the other hand, desired the complete removal of white power. Neither of these goals seemed achievable without an all-out war. It seemed in the best interest of all to avoid such a situation.

One of the demands of the beleaguered apartheid government was that in exchange for loss of power there should be a blanket amnesty for all the agents of apartheid, particularly the police and the armed forces. But while such an outcome would be beneficial to whites, it would not enjoy the support of those who were victims of apartheid. They would rightly feel that the beneficiaries and enforcers of apartheid were getting away too easily. The worst outcome of such a solution would be that black South Africans, victims of apartheid, would lose confidence in any of their leaders who could accept such a solution.

The flaw in this equation is that it does not offer a substantial benefit for both sides, and therefore does not inspire universal confidence. What was finally agreed upon was conditional amnesty. Firstly, the victims of apartheid should have the opportunity to tell what happened to them, and for their sufferings to be publicly acknowledged. Secondly, the perpetrators of political crimes should account for their deeds by making full and truthful disclosure of their actions. Lastly, reparations should be made to the victims.

An important aspect of the amnesty process is the stipulation that the life of the TRC be prescribed, on the grounds that a time frame would provide an incentive for perpetrators wishing to come forward and, after making full disclosure, to be amnistied. Failure to take advantage of the process within the prescribed time would open perpetrators to prosecution in the ordinary courts of law.

The shame of public exposure

During the hearings held by the TRC, harrowing stories of suffering and cruelty were heard. Did the process result in reconciliation?

One strong criticism of the amnesty process is that it frustrates justice and the desire for punishment. This does not take into account the fact that many of the recipients of amnesty experience a kind of punishment they never anticipated: the shame of being publicly exposed. The exposure of their participation in despicable acts of cruelty has in some cases resulted in broken families, disorientation and loss of self-esteem—a form of punishment that can arguably be far more devastating than that exacted by an ordinary jail sentence. Equally, the contrition leading to a plea for forgiveness, as part of a quest for reacceptance in society, can be far more restorative than the hoped-for rehabilitative effects of an ordinary prison term. The cure in the method of the TRC is located within social practice rather than in the artificiality of punitive isolation. This experience raises legitimate questions about traditional methods of retributive justice.

It can be said that as a result of the TRC, South Africa has become a more sensitive and a more complex society. South Africans have been forced to confront the complex contradictions of the human condition, and the need to devise adequate social arrangements to deal with them. The healing that results will not be instant. It will come from the new tendency for South Africans to be willing to

I was chained as you were chained. I was freed, and you have been freed. So if I can pardon my oppressors, you can too.

Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa (1918-)

Former Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of the North in South Africa and author of *South African Literature and Culture: Rediscovery of the Ordinary* and *Fools and Other Stories*.

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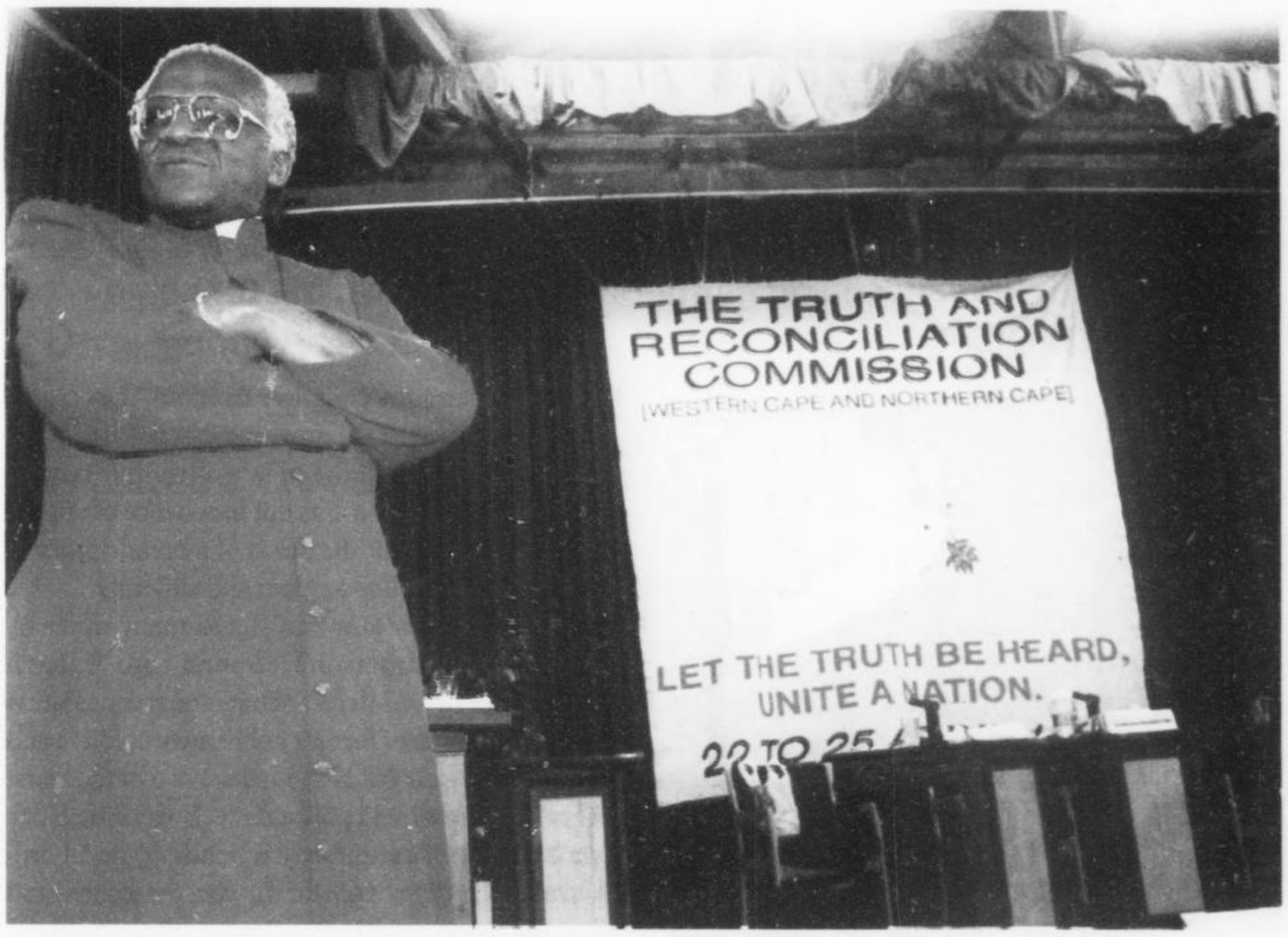

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Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at the first hearings of the TRC in Cape Town on April 30, 1996. Some 2,400 victims testified before the Commission over a three-year period.

And we forget
because we must
And not because we
will.

Matthew Arnold,
English poet (1822-1888)

negotiate their way through social, intellectual, religious, political and cultural diversity. In sum, it will come from the progressive accumulation of ethical and moral insights.

Certainly, some objectives have been achieved. No South African, particularly white South Africans, can ever claim ignorance of how apartheid disrupted and destroyed the lives of millions of black people in the name of the white electorate. All South Africans can now claim to have a common base of knowledge about where they have come from, particularly in the last 50 years, and this is an essential foundation for the emergence of a new national value system. Public acknowledgment of South Africa's history of racism represents a form of reconciliation.

Moving towards social justice

The TRC has not by any means been a smooth process. Many whites, particularly among Afrikaners, felt that the TRC was a punitive witch-hunt, targeting them as a community. This criticism did not take into account the fact that the TRC also addressed gross human rights violations perpetrated by the liberation movements themselves. The even-handedness of the TRC in this regard is very clear in its report, and could itself be regarded as a significant contribution to reconciliation.

There are people who are not happy with the amnesty mechanism and strongly feel that justice has been compromised (see next page). Fortunately, a negotiated transition ensured there were functioning institutions in place for citizens to exercise their rights.

Reconciliation is not a single event. It is a process. The TRC was a mechanism to deal with enormous human tensions which could have exploded with devastating consequences. It enabled South Africans to navigate successfully through very rough seas. The question is whether after its second democratic elections South Africa has the will and resourcefulness to take full advantage of the foundation it has inherited. Continuing disparities in wealth, housing, education, and health between blacks and whites indicate that the process of reconciliation must move to a second stage: the achievement of social justice. In this regard, the definitive test of a new democratic society is underway. But the disintegration of the South African state through racial conflict is unlikely in the foreseeable future. This outcome is a highly significant measure of the TRC's success. ■

Timeline

1948-1951: The National Party comes to power in 1948 and strengthens segregationist laws against Blacks (76% of the population) adopted since 1911 and builds apartheid (segregation between "Whites, Coloureds and Africans") into a system.
1959-1964: Mounting protest. The regime takes a harder line. African National Congress (ANC) leaders, including Nelson Mandela, are imprisoned for life in 1964.
1976: Soweto riots: 575 killed, mostly young people.
1989-1993: Prime Minister Frederik de Klerk negotiates with the ANC. Nelson Mandela is freed in 1990; the last three apartheid laws are abolished in 1991.
1994: Nelson Mandela is elected president in the first multiracial elections, held in April.
1995: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu is set up to investigate human rights violations committed between 1960 and 1994 and grant reparation to victims. It has no legal powers except to amnesty the authors of violations who so wish, on condition of "full disclosure of all relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective".
1998: The TRC's final report lists 21,000 victims, 2,400 of whom have testified in public hearings. Of some 7,000 requests for amnesty, most are granted, but decisions on several cases are still pending.
1999: Thabo Mbeki (ANC) is elected president in June, succeeding Nelson Mandela. ■

The price of truth

Max du Preez

Amnesty applications have shed light on unsolved murders in South Africa, but for some families knowing the truth is not enough

© David Turnley/Black Star/Studio X, Paris

A father and daughter mourn at the graveside of Matthew Goniwe, an anti-apartheid activist who was murdered in 1985 on the orders of the South African government. The Truth and Rehabilitation Commission honoured his memory.

Why should victims of apartheid accept that the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) gave amnesty to assassins and mass killers of the former apartheid regime? This is just one of the questions asked by critics of the TRC process inside the country. At the heart of all criticism is the legal power given to the commission to grant amnesty, under certain conditions to people who committed politically motivated crimes between 1960 and 1994. Amnesty means a person can never be criminally charged with that crime, nor can he be sued in a civil court for damages resulting from that act.

More than 7,000 people applied for amnesty, including two former cabinet ministers of Prime Minister P.W. Botha's government and several of his police generals. Most have been granted amnesty, although several cases are still under consideration.

Very often, the families of the victims murdered by former policemen and soldiers, and in a few cases by members of the two liberation armies, have rejected the entire notion of amnesty. The most prominent include the widow and son of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko, who was beaten to death in a cell by policemen, and the family of Griffiths Mxenge, a black lawyer whose throat was cut by three policemen because he represented anti-apartheid activists.

They argue that the provision for amnesty robs them of any sense of justice. In their view, murderers should face a criminal trial and be jailed—failing to do so cheapens the lives of their victims. Simply confessing to these brutal acts should not be enough to buy the perpetrators complete freedom, they argue. They are also against the provision that no civil claims may be made against the killers once they receive amnesty, arguing that it cuts out the chance of obtaining compensation for the death of a breadwinner to their families as well as for pain and suffering.

The counter-argument, stated many times by Commission chairperson Desmond Tutu, is that it would not be in the interest of national reconciliation to send hundreds of former policemen, soldiers and even politicians to jail. Nonetheless, two of the worst killers in the apartheid police force, Eugene de Kock (whose request for amnesty is pending) and Ferdi Barnard (who did not ask for it), were prosecuted and given life sentences. Wouter Basson, the head of the former government's Chemical and Biological Warfare programme, is currently on trial. There is no evidence to suggest that these cases undermined the reconciliation process in any way.

Another argument often put forward in favour of amnesty is that much, if not most, of the information the TRC obtained about the evils committed by the apartheid governments was disclosed to them through the amnesty applications of perpetrators of gross human rights violations. If it were not for these statements, the truth about a large number of unexplained events and unsolved murders would not have come out. And for the nation as a whole, if there had to be a tradeoff, truth was considered more important than justice.

New heroes

The amnesty applications of Phila Ndwandwe's murderers is a case in point. The young mother of a baby boy and a unit commander of the African National Congress army, Ndwandwe was stationed with her unit in neighbouring Swaziland when she crossed the border one day, never to be seen again. For many years the rumours dogged her family that she could possibly have been a collaborator of the apartheid government. Then the story came out in the amnesty application of four policemen. They had lured her over the border with a false message, and then kept her in a desolate house. There they assaulted and tortured her in an effort to get her to join the apartheid police or tell them her unit's secrets. According to the policemen's statements, she told them she would prefer to die. They shot her in the head and buried her.

Phila Ndwandwe's remains were dug up and reburied at a huge public funeral, where her nine-year-old son received a medal for exceptional bravery on behalf of his dead mother. Instead of Phila Ndwandwe being remembered as an apartheid collaborator, South Africa gained a new hero. ■

What is true of individuals is true of nations. One cannot forgive too much. The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

Mahatma Gandhi, Indian philosopher and politician (1869-1948)

Journalist in Johannesburg

Chile: doing a deal with memory

Oscar Godoy Arcaya

Chileans have made a pact to ease the transition to democracy. But the collective memory has played a more crucial part in progress towards a rule of law

Disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind.

Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

The question of human rights violations by state officials during the military dictatorship is not a priority in the current political debate. Chileans have been saying this since 1990 in political speeches, in the media and through public opinion polls. Yet at regular intervals, this serious issue flares up in the national debate. When it does, political figures feel obliged to make amends, but as a rule they prefer to let time do its work. Is this passivity or a laissez faire attitude that should be legally condemned?

"Justice as far as possible," was the line taken by Patricio Aylwin while he was president. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (see box page 27) formed part of this approach. Its aim was to compile a list of victims of human rights violations under the military regime and identify the guilty parties. The idea was to establish the truth, award material and moral compensation to the victims, and lay the foundations of national reconciliation. But the Commission's work has been limited by an amnesty law passed under the military regime. In other words, its role has been largely symbolic: to preserve the history of the repression in the collective memory.

The Commission's report has nevertheless had a considerable impact. The truth began to come out, opening up new opportunities for "justice as far as possible". Under the current president, Eduardo Frei, the courts have handed out prison sentences to the former head of the DINA, the dictatorship's secret police, and to other military and police officers involved in the repression.[1]

But two big issues have been put on the back burner—the crimes covered by the amnesty law (committed between 1973 and 1978) and the responsibility of General Augusto Pinochet. Many

1 Manuel Contreras, the former head of the DINA, was sentenced in Chile for the murder in Washington of Orlando Letelier, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Allende government, because Chile's amnesty law does not cover crimes committed abroad. In July 1999, in a decision described as "historic", Chile's Supreme Court confirmed the indictment of high-ranking officers on the grounds that when victims' bodies could not be found, the crimes involved were "permanent and not subject to limitation" and therefore not covered by the amnesty law. *Editor*

An anti-Pinochet demonstration outside the Chilean embassy in Madrid in October 1998.

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Professor at the Institute of Political Sciences of the Catholic University of Chile and a member of the Academy of Social, Political and Moral Sciences of the Institute of Chile

Chileans and foreigners wonder why a democratic government has not managed to repeal a law which seems a disgrace and was passed in undemocratic circumstances.

How is it that Pinochet has remained beyond the reach of the law and that his political and criminal responsibility has not been established? The answers to these questions are connected to the special nature of Chile's transition to democracy, which includes an unspoken agreement to keep the amnesty law on the books and guarantee immunity for Pinochet. The transition is the result of a pact, whose effects have been strengthened by the existence of a right-wing electorate comprising up to 40 per cent of voters and an electoral system that prevents a majority from dominating parliament. Agreements have been made; there has been neither passivity nor laxity.

Reawakened memories

The society's collective memory is stronger than this, however. Whenever a debate arises about the political heritage of the military regime or someone tries to amend the constitution, memories are reawakened of prisoners who vanished, executions with or without trial and the torture inflicted on thousands of Chileans. There is no collective amnesia: the wickedness of the crimes has left an indelible mark.

For nearly nine years, there was a tug-of-war between collective memory and political determination to forget. On the one hand, several legal actions were started against Pinochet and members of his regime. On the other, one could point to a certain sluggishness in the legal system, a veto by the armed forces, and the feeling that drawn-out legal proceedings against Pinochet would not catch up with him and that he would die a natural death before coming to trial. This was the situation when he was arrested in London.

Pinochet enjoys immunity because he has a diplomatic passport and is a senator for life, and the Chilean government has accepted this. The government maintains that it cannot accept foreign jurisdiction over him that it has neither recognized by treaty nor through ratification of an international legal instrument.

I approve of this approach because states are subject to international law even if it conflicts with my ideals. I also approve of it because I think the democratic transition is our business. I would like to see, in my lifetime, Chilean courts put Pinochet on trial for what he did and remove him from parliament. I would like to see the armed forces quietly accept and respect court decisions and see the pro-Pinochet right accept the requirements of the rule of law and representative democracy. In sum, I would like to see judicial sovereignty in Chile fully deployed, as part of the rule of law in a strong and established democracy.

Pinochet's detention has moved the Chilean justice system forward. Politicians have turned a spotlight on the crimes of the dictatorship, and public opinion is starting to accept that globalization doesn't only involve trade. This is a process which is taking us towards a cosmopolitan society equipped with supra-national bodies based on freedom and the defence of human rights. ■

Knowing how to forget is more a matter of chance than an art.

Baltasar Gracian, Spanish moralist and essayist (1601-1658)

An unwritten page of history

Fabiola Letelier del Solar and Víctor Espinoza Cuevas

Only a few of those responsible for crimes under the dictatorship have so far been tried

Some people have alleged that the crimes of the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile should not be punished because pouring salt into this open wound, establishing the truth and obtaining justice would destabilize democracy and endanger so-called social peace.

But all efforts to stifle memory have failed. The arrest of Augusto Pinochet in London on October 16, 1998 revealed how fragile the Chilean democratic system is and showed the true face of a country which cannot face up to a period of its history which continues to divide Chileans into two irreconcilable camps.

The systematic cover-up of the dictatorship's crimes began on the day of the military coup d'état against President Salvador Allende in 1973. But from the start of the repression, human rights organizations and groups of victims' families tried to find out the truth. They all worked together to build this collective memory of the past. After a while, the action of a band of mothers who denounced the crimes committed against their loved ones became the mainspring of the struggle to restore democracy. The main theme of the campaign was "never again"—only the establishment of a nationwide culture of respect for human rights, a complete account of what went on and full rights to justice could ensure that history would not repeat itself.

We were critical of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up at the beginning of the transition process (see box). Why, we asked, did its brief only cover those who disappeared and

Respectively president and executive secretary of Chile's Corporation for the Defence of the People's Rights (CODEPU)

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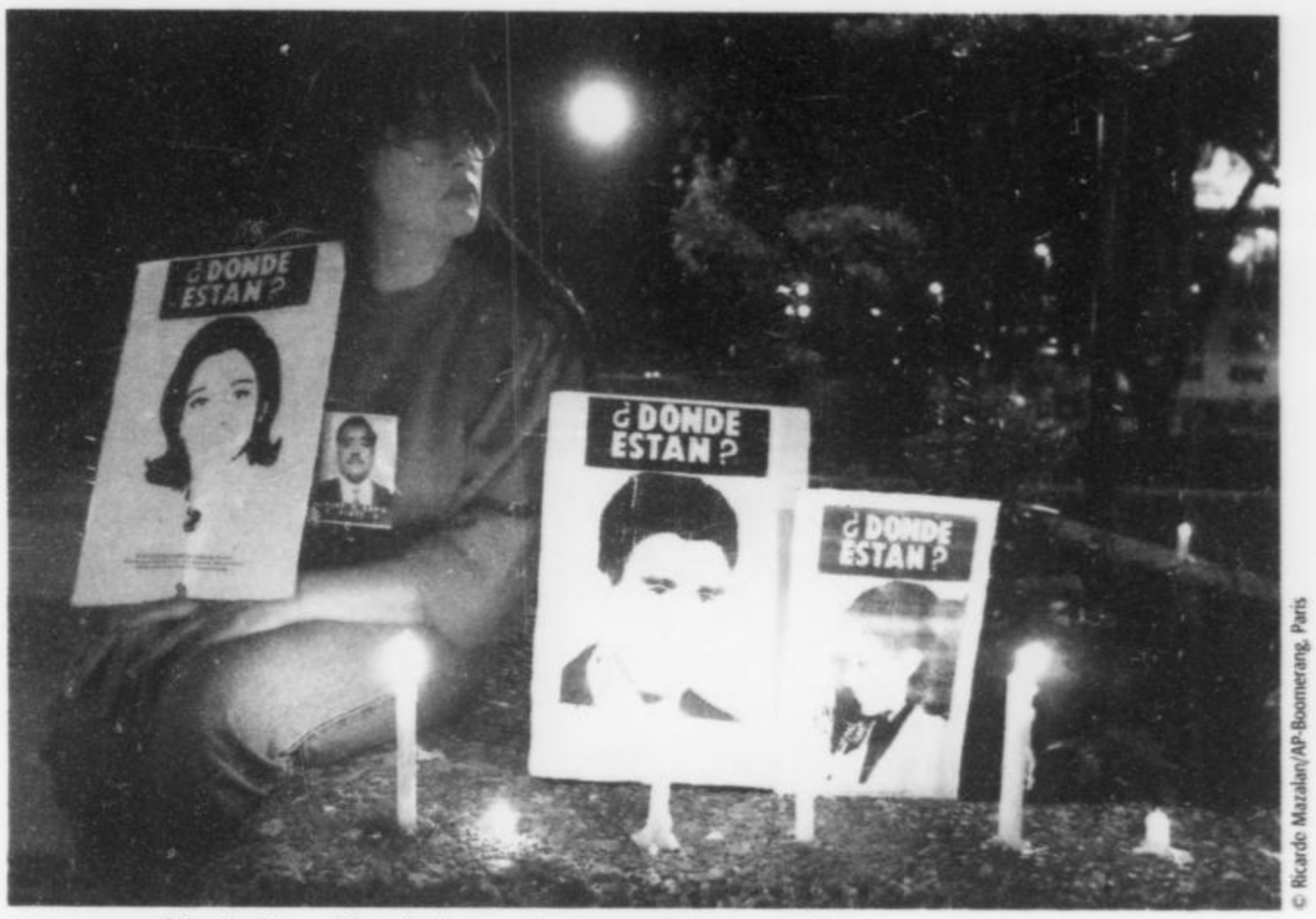
leave aside those who were tortured, forced to flee abroad, arbitrarily arrested or sent into internal exile?

Most of all, we objected to its decision not to name those responsible for the crimes, which would have at least been symbolic justice. And the truth that the Commission established was only the version presented by the victims, their families and human rights organizations, since the main culprits, the armed forces, refused to have anything to do with it. So it was only half the truth. A page of our history is still unwritten.

International solidarity

Yet through the Commission's brief, the government recognized that the dictatorship had systematically violated human rights on a massive scale. This organized remembrance of the recent past was really an appeal for people to face the future bolstered by a determination that such crimes must never happen again.

Later, fearing the clashes that digging up the truth and dispensing justice would inevitably provoke, the nine-year-old government coalition passed measures that removed the issue from the public arena. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its successor, the Reparations and Reconciliation Commission, were supposed to have settled the problem once and for all. But far from recognizing the ethical, political, judicial and social dimensions of the problem, they reduced it to a search for the remains of those who disappeared, with the result that the nation's ordeal was revived.



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A woman with photos of her father and other missing people takes part in a candlelight vigil organized in Chile in October 1999 by relatives of those who disappeared during the dictatorship.

Pinochet's arrest means the country cannot avoid facing the events whose memory, however painful it may be, we have been fighting to keep alive. Indeed, over 40 complaints have been made against Pinochet before a judge which have so far led to the arrest and trial of a dozen military officers (see note page 25).

The determination of the complainants, along with international solidarity, made possible an act of justice none of us had imagined: the imprisonment of Pinochet in a gilded cage. As the former head of state, he is the chief perpetrator of what we regard as crimes against humanity committed under his rule inside and outside the country. These crimes should be tried by an international tribunal. Since such a tribunal is still not functioning, Pinochet ought to be tried in his own country.

But Chile has neither adequate institutions nor the political will for that. So far there has been no real move to repeal the 1978 amnesty law or end the system of appointed senators. All this means that Chile is a partial and hesitant democracy, unable to guarantee a fair trial for Pinochet. Also, because he is a senator for life, his parliamentary immunity would have to be lifted before he could be tried. But since he is still a military officer, an examining magistrate could declare himself incompetent to handle the case and might send it to a military court, which obviously would not be independent enough. So Pinochet should be tried in Spain. This would be a big step towards ending impunity, and an exemplary act against the treachery and tyranny of all dictatorships.

Building a collective memory implies knowledge of the past and all its consequences. As long as it is shrouded in the veil of pardon without justice, we cannot plan a future of peace in a society reconciled with itself. ■

Timeline

1970: A socialist, Salvador Allende, is elected president.

1973: Allende is overthrown in a military coup led by Gen Augusto Pinochet on September 11.

1978: Gen Pinochet pushes through parliament a law (still in force) granting amnesty for all crimes except non-political offences committed between September 1973 and March 1978, the main period of repression.

1988: Gen Pinochet loses a referendum he has organized in a bid to stay in power until 1997.

1989: A Christian Democrat, Patricio Aylwin, is elected president in December in the first democratic election for 16 years. Gen Pinochet remains commander in chief of the army.

1991: A Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up to investigate the repression between 1973 and 1990 and headed by Sen Raul Rettig produces a figure of 3,197 people killed, including 850 whose bodies are missing.

1993: Eduardo Frei (Christian Democrat) is elected president.

1994: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission awards compensation to 2,115 families of the victims.

1996: A Spanish judge, Baltasar Garzón, issues a request for Gen Pinochet's extradition to stand trial for genocide, torture and the disappearance of a number of people, all of them Spanish citizens in Chile.

1998: Gen Pinochet, now a senator for life, is arrested at a London clinic where he is having medical treatment.

1999: On March 24, the British House of Lords refuses to grant Gen Pinochet immunity but limits the extraditable offences to torture perpetrated after 1988, when Britain ratified the international convention against torture. In May, the High Court in London rejects Pinochet's appeal. On October 8, magistrate Ronald Bartle rules that he can be extradited to Spain. If the general loses an appeal against this decision, the British home secretary will make the final decision on his extradition. ■

Russia: an unfinished job

Alexis Berelowitch

Russians looked back in anger when *perestroika* revealed the full scale of Stalinist massacres and repression. But current difficulties have largely halted this reappraisal of the past

The body of a dictator is buried and dug up several times in Georgian filmmaker Tengiz Abuladze's 1986 movie *Repentance*. Stalin had a similar fate: he was symbolically exhumed during the political "thaw" of Nikita Khrushchev's reign, hidden away during the Brezhnev years, disinterred again during *perestroika* and is today more or less out of sight.

These ups and downs show how hard it is for Russians to perform acts of remembering and mourning as a prelude to accepting and coping with what happened in the dark days of Stalinist terror.

During the thaw years, between 1956 and 1964, Soviet society was confronted with its past for the first time when Khrushchev denounced Stalin's crimes. But the denunciation only went part of the way, and a thoroughgoing reappraisal of Stalinism was not possible. From the mid-1960s on, all references to Stalin were censored. During the Brezhnev years, the dictator was quietly rehabilitated as the architect of the victory over Nazi Germany.

But while the Soviet establishment officially tried to play down or make people forget about Stalinism, the most radical wing of the liberal intelligentsia, the dissidents, continued their scrutiny of the Stalinist era. The high point of this struggle to remember came in 1974 with the publication in the West of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*.

Concern about the future cannot be regarded as willingness to forget. Forgetting should never be thought of as a passport to social peace. Memory is part of civil peace.

Bronislaw Geremek, Polish historian and politician (1932-)

In the grip of a reading frenzy

When *perestroika* allowed people to speak freely, from 1985 on, the first thing the intelligentsia did was to turn to the past and try to make sense of it. In 1986 and 1987, historical novels which had been written decades earlier and had either been unpublished in the Soviet Union or published only in the West turned the spotlight back onto Stalinism. Nearly 10 million copies were printed of the most popular of these novels, Anatoly Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat*. All the key moments and events of the Stalinist era were now dealt with—the 1930s, collectivization, the Second World War and state-sponsored anti-semitism.

In 1988, Vassili Grossman's great novel *Life and Destiny*, which had been published in the West in 1980, appeared in Russia, followed in 1990 by *The Gulag Archipelago*. The circulation of the magazine *Novy Mir* in which these works appeared reached two million. The whole country was gripped with a reading frenzy.

When the Soviet people discovered the scale of the disaster it came as a terrible shock. A sense of shared responsibility spread throughout the country. People wondered whether the whole society should repent, and there was a call for a Nuremberg-type trial of Stalinism. It was no longer just a matter of contrasting an evil Stalin with good communists and comrades of Lenin, as had been done during the 1987 rehabilitation of the victims of the Stalinist show trials, but of asking what it was in Russian society that had made Stalinism possible. Essays and articles by historians took over from literature. Most authors belonging to the liberal intelligentsia looked for the causes in Russian history—in serfdom, the absence of a civil society and democratic practices, and the huge size of the state sector. Essays and articles by historians took over where literature left off.

Waning interest in the past

The duty of remembrance was performed by groups which painstakingly sought out the names of the victims, as the young historian Dimitri Yurasov did, or looked for mass graves.

This movement led to the founding in 1987-1988 of a Moscow-based human rights association called Memorial, with member groups all over the Soviet Union. It drew a map of the labour camps, set up a museum and compiled lists of victims. In 1989, the Leningrad newspaper *Vecherny* published day after day the names of people who had been shot.

At first Memorial was a mass organization which planned to put up a monument to the victims. But which victims? The victims of Stalinism or everyone who had been persecuted by the Soviet regime? From 1988 on, criticism was levelled not only at the Stalinist period but at the entire socialist regime, and this encouraged the adoption of the second definition.

But just as the monument project was being discussed, public opinion began to lose interest in the past. In 1996, the inauguration of a memorial called The Mask of Sorrow in the Kolyma region, where the most terrible labour camps had been, passed largely unnoticed.

There seem to have been several reasons for this public loss of interest. First the economic disaster and its social consequences are leading Russians to give priority to the present. They are also making people question the very validity of the democratic project. Many Russians feel nostalgic for

Sociologist specializing in contemporary Russian society and teacher at Paris IV university

© Sean Sprague/Panos Pictures, London

Files on thousands of prisoners of the Gulag are kept in the archives of Memorial, a Moscow-based association.

the Soviet era and about a quarter of them hanker after what they call the most "glorious" era, when the USSR was feared and respected, during Stalin's rule.

The sense of national humiliation Russians have felt in the 1990s has weakened their desire to delve into the darkest years. Opinion polls show more and more people think there is too much talk about Stalinist crimes. For some Russians, as the French historian Maria Ferretti has shown, the desire to forget this period of the past has sprung from a rejection of the whole Soviet period as an unfortunate interlude in Russian history and from the glorification of pre-1917 Russia. Today's Russia is coming to be seen as the direct heir of Tsarist Russia, passing over the black hole of socialist rule.

So the Stalinist experience has now been erased. The dictator remains the least popular figure in Russian history—though those with favourable opinions of him rose from eight per cent in 1990 to 15 per cent in 1997, while his disapproval rating fell from 48 per cent to 36 per cent in the same period. The proportion of the population which listed the mass repression of the 1930s among the main events of the 20th century fell from 38 per cent in 1989 to no more than 18 per cent in 1994.

This new situation has not stopped investigations into Stalinism and its crimes, but it has greatly changed their nature. During *perestroika*, research was a joint effort and a central part of daily life, but now it is confined to professional scholars. Memorial has became mainly a research centre. Historians working on the Soviet period are devoting most of their efforts to publishing official archives, providing people with a less romantic and increasingly accurate view of what went on. But the task of remembering for society as a whole has again been interrupted before Russians have been able, at last, to reconcile themselves with their own history. ■

Timeline

1917: The October Revolution brings the Bolsheviks to power under Lenin's leadership.

1918-1922: Civil war and famine, confrontation between the Red and White armies, political executions. Foundation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

1924: Death of Lenin. Stalin becomes general secretary of the communist party.

1930-1931: The rich peasants (kulaks) are dispossessed of their land and massacred. At least two million dead.

1936-1937: Moscow show trials, purges, reign of terror. The number of prisoners in the gulag rises from 500,000 in 1934 to 2.5 million in the early 1950s.

1953: Death of Stalin. Thousands of prisoners freed.

1956: At the 20th Communist Party Congress, Khruschev denounces Stalin's crimes. The thaw begins.

1964: Khruschev is removed from power; end of thaw; rise of Brezhnev.

1985: Mikhail Gorbachev launches *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (public openness and accountability).

1991: Boris Yeltsin is democratically elected president of the Russian Federation. The USSR is officially dissolved in December. Proclamation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. ■

Cambodia: a wound that will not heal

Rithy Panh

A Cambodian film-maker describes how he came to terms with horror. His country will never recover its lost identity, he says, unless it puts the past on trial

I left Cambodia when I was 15 with a spiritual wound I knew would never heal. I had survived the terrible ordeal of the Khmer Rouge genocide, which killed a quarter of the country's population. I didn't understand how such a massacre had been possible. Even now, I hardly do.

As soon as I reached the camp at Mairut, in Thailand, I stopped fearing for my life, but I felt a profound sadness, whereas I should have been happy. I felt my whole life was already behind me, that it belonged to those years of struggle for survival.

I wanted to forget. Go somewhere else, where I'd have no memory and no recollections, where nobody would know what I'd been through. I'd seen and heard my relatives suffer. Our family had been deported from Phnom Penh to Chrey, a village in the middle of nowhere. One of my sisters was brought back to my parents, physically and psychologically exhausted after building dikes and digging canals. Soon afterwards, my father died. He was a peasant's son who had become a teacher and then a primary school inspector. He decided to stop eating. He chose to die as an act of rebellion, a last act of freedom. Then, one after another, my mother, my sisters and my nephews died of hunger or exhaustion.

We live in a world where a man is more likely to be tried if he kills a single person than if he kills 100,000.

Kofi Annan, Ghanaian diplomat, Secretary General of the UN (1938-)

Survivor's guilt

I didn't want to talk about any of that. I had made it part of myself, and it became almost the mainspring of my survival. When I was living as an exile in France, there was a long period when I refused to speak my native language and rejected any link with Cambodia. I had been uprooted and I felt somehow incomplete, torn between forgetting and remembering, between past and present, always ill at ease. I lived with memories of my relatives, with the anxiety—the certainty—that the same tragic story would repeat itself. It was burned into my flesh forever, as if with a branding iron, that this is what the world is like: a place where there's a lot of indifference and hypocrisy and little compassion.

When you come out of a war, you're not sure that you've left violence behind you. You are locked in a culture of survival. And when you've survived genocide[1], you always feel guilty about being a survivor.

When the Italian writer Primo Levi came back from the Nazi death camps, he said that "you feel others have died in your place, that we're alive because of a privilege we haven't deserved, because of an injustice done to the dead. It isn't wrong to be alive, but we feel it is."

Long afterwards, I learned to speak again and to accept what had happened to me. Then I rediscovered my memories, my ability to imagine, to laugh, to dream, to rebuild my life. In Cambodia, they say people who've died a violent death can't be reincarnated, that the souls of dead people who haven't had a religious funeral and burial wander the earth forever, haunting the living. There are bones all over the place in the countryside. People find them whenever they start building.

A machine to destroy memory

If you can't grieve, the violence continues. The Cambodian mother of a model family, well integrated in France, cut off her child's head just as the Khmer Rouge killers had chopped off her father's. Similar cases have occurred in Cambodia. At Preah Sihanouk Hospital in Phnom Penh, the only department that provides psychiatric treatment takes patients from all over the country. Sometimes there are 250 of them waiting in the corridor. You only have to see how many are depressive and destitute to realize that something must be done. There is a massive collective wound.

The terrible thing about past wars and about the Cambodian genocide is not only the millions of dead, the widows, the orphans, the amputees and the depressed, it's also our shattered identity, the ruins of our social cohesion.

The first political decisions of the Khmer Rouge, after they won power on April 17, 1975, were unutterably violent. They emptied towns and hospitals, closed schools, abolished money, deported people en masse to the countryside, defrocked monks and looted old houses.[2] "Absolutely everything belongs to *Angkar* [the communist party]," they said. "If the party tells you to do something you must do it! Anyone who

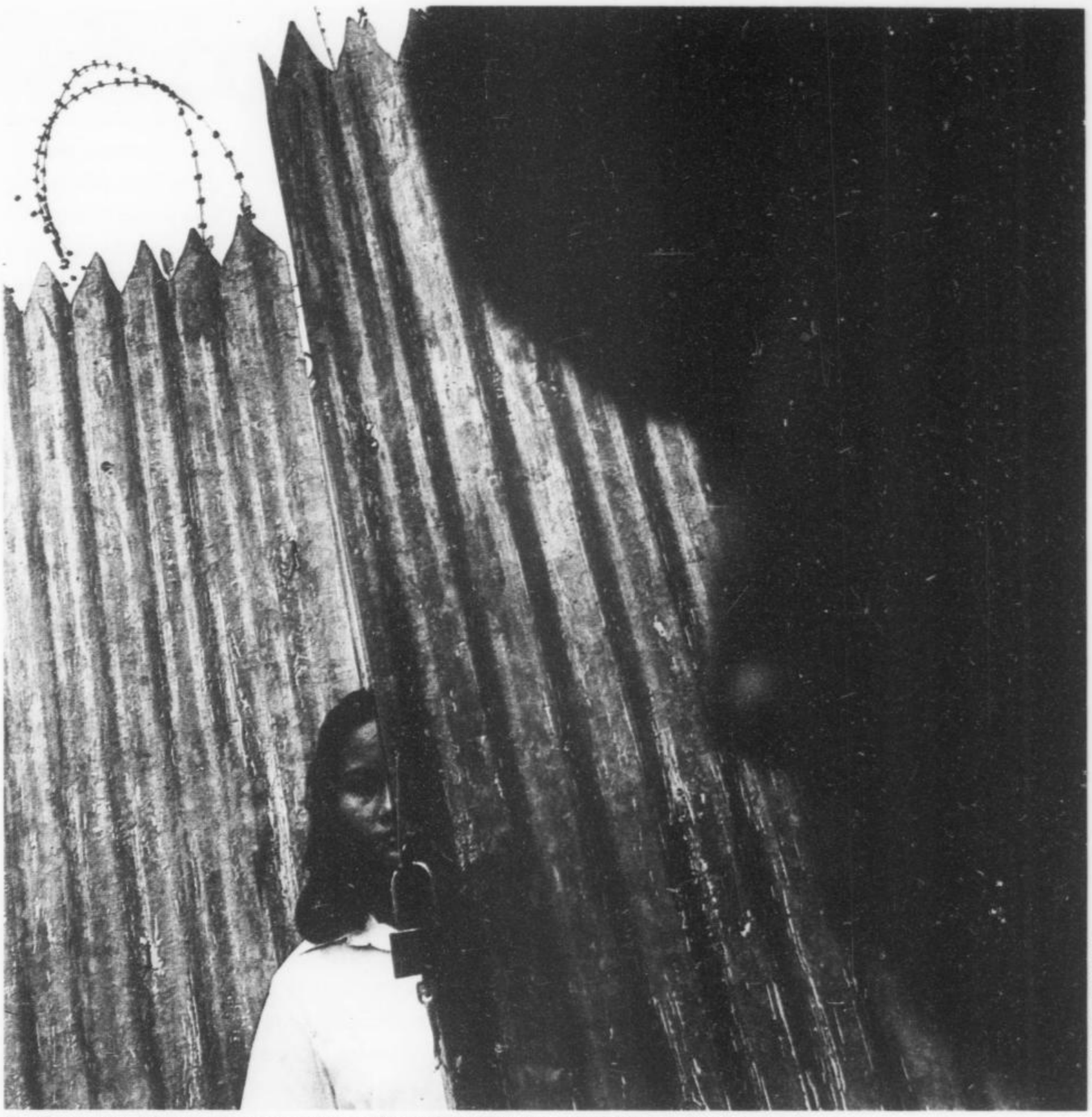
Rithy Panh's films include *Site 2* (1989), *Cambodia: Between War and Peace* (1991) *Rice People* (1994) and *One Evening after the War* (1997).

1. The author use this word in its broader sense; contrast UN's stricter definition, see page 20.

2. The Khmer Rouge divided the Cambodian people into two categories: the "old" people living in rural areas and the "new" people in the cities who were "tainted" by culture and knowledge.

The best memory is that which forgets nothing but pardons injuries. Write kindness in marble and write injuries in dust.

Persian proverb



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Survivors should have the courage to confront their history as "a debt owed to the dead and an obligation to their children".

objects is an enemy, anyone who opposes is a corpse." People had to dress in black, change the way they spoke, use certain words and exclude others from their vocabulary. It was forbidden to sing, dance, say prayers and even talk to other people. My father, who had spent all his life trying to improve Cambodia's public education system, was particularly worried about the decision to ban teaching. "The spade is your pen, the rice-paddy is your paper," was the message *Angkar* drove home.

All social classes were affected to varying degrees by mass deportations to the countryside, forced labour, summary executions and famine. Paradoxically, all these absurd sacrifices were made in the name of restoring the glory of the Angkor era. All the roots of our culture and identity, the basic social relationships and symbolic links which attached Cambodians to their world were methodically and deliberately attacked and destroyed.

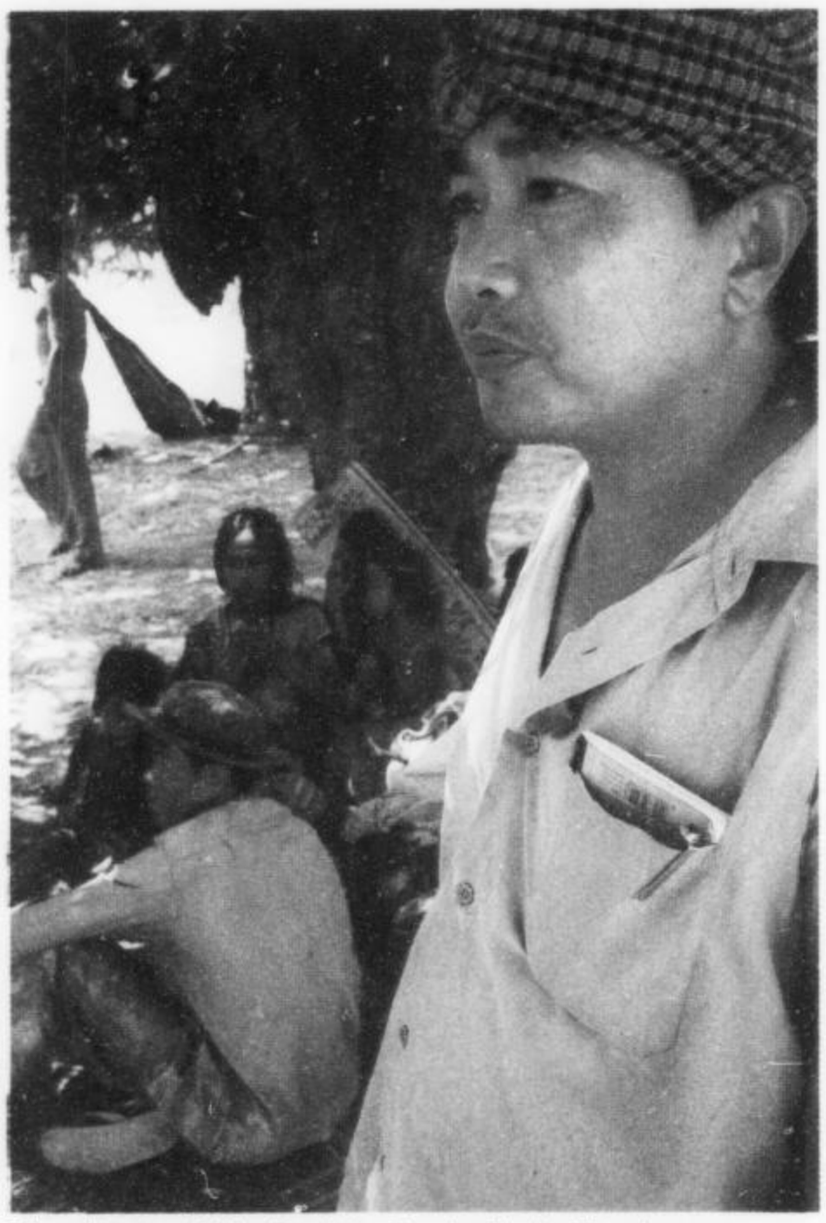
Most of the detention centres were set up in pagodas, places of prayer and compassion, or in schools, places of knowledge. *Angkar* was a machine for destroying identity and wiping out memory.

Before they executed their victims, the killers tortured them and made them write hundreds of pages of false confessions dictated by Khmer Rouge officials. After being forced to denounce their families and friends, the prisoners were executed. "By eliminating you," *Angkar* said, "we don't lose anything. It's better to wrongly arrest somebody than to wrongly let somebody go."

One of the executioners at Camp S-21, in Tuol Sleng—Pol Pot's main torture centre—today only expresses his "regrets"; he doesn't feel guilty. He destroyed non-persons, people the Khmer Rouge had stripped of all humanity.

This genocide was "silent". The Khmer Rouge imposed a reign of terror, and most executions were carried out without witnesses and without noise. The world let Cambodians die and didn't seem to care. Not many people denounced the massacres.

When I arrived in France in 1979, I was amazed to find that the Khmer Rouge still occupied Cambodia's seat at the United Nations. A few years later, I took the absence of the word "genocide" from the Paris peace accords as a refusal to allow the survivors to remember, as an insult to the victims' dignity. ▶



© John Vink/Magnum, Paris

Film director Rithy Panh in Cambodia in March 1999 during the shooting of a documentary film about the installation of a trans-Cambodian optic fibre cable. Human bones were discovered when trenches for the cable were dug.

I went back to Cambodia in 1990 after 11 years in exile. I wanted to find the survivors of my family and recover the remains of the dead and give them a proper burial, so their souls would stop wandering the earth and could be reincarnated in the cycle of life and death. I wanted at least to confirm they had died, so I could start to mourn properly.

I went to Tuol Sleng camp, which has been turned into a "genocide museum". I wanted to try to find a photo of my uncle among the hundreds of pictures of the dead pinned on the walls. But I couldn't bring myself to go in. I went back in 1991 to film the few survivors of the camp (only seven out of some 15,000 people who passed through it). I wanted to understand the banalization of evil and the dehumanizing machinery of the Khmer Rouge.

But we're afraid of this recent past. Cambodians who dare to talk about it are divided. Some think we should forget and look to the future, that there's no point in inflicting another ordeal on ourselves by trying to bring back memories and pick over old wounds. They fear that if trials are held they will revive serious political quarrels which might set off another civil war. Or else they generalize about Cambodians and say most of them are "fatalistic" and accept a history of war and genocide as their "karma".

This approach was dismissed by a 30-year-old peasant called Torng, who was typical of many people I spoke to while I was filming. "The Khmer Rouge didn't just kill people," he said. "They turned our generation into ignoramuses, animals, idiots, who don't know where they're going. We didn't study. All we know is how to use our physical strength. So we can only get jobs as peasants or labourers. The Khmer Rouge should be put on trial. If they aren't, people like me will be tempted to take revenge."

I believe, and so do others, that we should face up to our history, so that our relatives and friends didn't die in vain. Mourning won't be possible unless moral and political responsibility for the Cambodian genocide is established. A trial of the Khmer Rouge, before the Cambodian people, is absolutely essential. We have to give meaning to basic ideas of law and justice in this country. In a democratic society, you can't kill without being punished.

We must give our memory a fair and dignified trial in order to understand the past. I'm not bothered about the sentences that would be handed down. Only the truth can free us—the whole truth, however horrific. The other point of such a trial, which is just as important, would be to restore our identity. The Khmer Rouge have plunged generations of Cambodians into a vicious circle of cultural loss.

Not many Cambodians tell their children about the genocide, which is a fuzzy corner of their memory. But we can't build our future by forgetting. The survivors must tell their stories and ensure that the memory of what happened is handed down from the past to the present. We owe a debt to the dead and we have an obligation to our children.

We shan't be able to get rid of this 30-year culture of violence, cast out the monster that is fear and put behind us the collective guilt we feel as survivors unless we manage to understand our history. ■

Timeline

1953: Cambodia, a French protectorate since 1863, gains independence, becoming a constitutional monarchy under King Norodom Sihanouk.

1960: Emergence of the Khmer Rouge organization, led by Pol Pot.

1970: Coup d'état by Prime Minister Lon Nol and proclamation of a republic. Sihanouk aligns with a faction of the Khmer Rouge. In the ensuing civil war he is supported by China and North Viet Nam, while the United States and South Viet Nam back Lon Nol.

1975: The Khmer Rouge seize the capital, Phnom Penh, in April and impose a totalitarian regime. Over 1.7 million people, or a quarter of the population, are killed.

1978: Viet Nam invades Cambodia in December and a new civil war begins.

1982: Sihanouk forms a government to resist the invasion with two other factions, including one from the Khmer Rouge, and then moves closer to the pro-Vietnamese Prime Minister, Hun Sen.

1989: Vietnamese troops withdraw.

1991: A ceasefire takes effect in July. The Paris Agreement, on October 23, recognizes the Supreme National Council headed by Sihanouk and places Cambodia under UN control.

1993: The monarchy is restored under Sihanouk.

1997: The Khmer Rouge breaks up. Pol Pot dies in 1998. Several former Khmer Rouge leaders join the royal army.

1999: Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has agreed to put the main leaders of the Khmer Rouge on trial, opposes plans for the future court to be composed mainly of foreign judges, as the UN wishes. He also opposes setting up a "truth commission". At least three major Khmer Rouge leaders are left at large. ■

Rwanda's collective amnesia

Benjamin Sehene

Christianity tried to destroy the collective memory of Rwandans. After independence, ethnicity became the yardstick of identity and the Tutsis were demonized. Then came the horrors of genocide.

In Kigali, they are known as *bafuye bahagaze*—the living dead. They are the hundreds of thousands of survivors of genocide who have psychological problems. In September 1994, I met one of them—a little girl called Élise, the only member of her family who had survived. She was just under five years old, the same age as the civil war in Rwanda, which went on from 1990 to 1994.

Élise suffered from loss of memory and had a very low attention span. She could never remember my first name. She had no recollection of anything that had happened more than 20 minutes before—it was as if she was trying to protect herself. One evening I found a way of getting her to remember my name. She wore oversized pyjamas and I said, "Think of the word 'pyjama' every time you see me—pyjama-Benjamin." Whenever she saw me after that, she would happily shout: "Hey, wait, it's pyjama-Benjamin!"

Like that little girl clinging to an image, Rwandans should perhaps look for a common symbol which could unite them around their lost memory.

For centuries, Rwandan civilization rested on a pyramidal power structure which was rooted in myths. It shaped the economy and conditioned social relations. It built (and still builds) a tyranny based on hierarchy, but a hierarchy imbued with a sense of restraint. In an atmosphere of self-censorship and silence, things are left unsaid—between parents and children, husbands and wives, *shebujas* (bosses) and their *bagaragu* (servants) and between Tutsis, with their sense of superiority, and Hutus, who feel inferior.

Bringing the truth to light is already a start, as a victory for justice and a form of relief for the victims.

Robert Badinter, French lawyer and politician (1928-)

Severing links with the past

But the establishment of Christianity, which began with the arrival of missionaries in 1900, destroyed Rwanda's collective memory. In 1931, the Church deposed Musinga, the Tutsis' last divine-right monarch, when he refused to be converted. Conversion to Christianity would have undermined his legitimacy and destroyed the meaning of the magical and religious functions of the monarchy, the pillar of Rwandan society. All the traditions which made up the country's social and spiritual fabric were dubbed pagan rites and banned, despite the fact that they fostered social cohesion by bringing together the three ethnic groups—Hutus, Tutsis and Twas.

The abolition of the *Abirus*, the royal committee of wise men that was the official guardian of the society's collective memory and its esoteric rites, marked the end of the only high-level institution that acted as a counterweight because it was made up mostly of Hutus. A proverb in the Kinyarwanda language was coined to describe this break with the esoteric past: *Kerezia ya kuyeho kizira* (the Church has forbidden the forbidden).

After independence in 1962, the new republic of Rwanda tried to overturn the traditional pyramid-shaped power structure, destroyed even more of the traditional sense of national identity and wiped out the nation's collective memory. The republic defined its identity by abolishing the old order, which it regarded as being too strongly marked by centuries of Tutsi monarchs, and by basing its legitimacy on the majority ethnic group, the Hutus.

Everything with a Tutsi connotation was banned. Thousands of words rooted in Rwanda's history and social organization were struck out of the language. The ethnicization of the state, supposedly to create a "social balance", led to a quota system which limited the proportion of Tutsis in higher education and the civil service to nine per cent. It was based solely on numbers. People's ethnic affiliation could be checked from their identity documents. The new rulers said they were redressing the social balance after centuries of feudal domination.

The country lived for 35 years in a state of growing amnesia, dominated by the law of silence, of the unspoken, of memories collectively repressed

In the vacuum left by the collapse of the traditional collective memory, ethnicity became the only point of reference. This eventually led to the demonization of the Tutsis in order to justify their exclusion from society. The Tutsis were dehumanized and dubbed *inyenzi* (cockroaches), just as the Nazis had called German Jews "vermin". Many terms of abuse were used to indicate they were unwanted parasites. It is easier to crush a cockroach underfoot than to kill a person.

The "social revolution" which gave birth to the new Rwandan republic began in 1959 with a bloody revolt by the Hutus, involving the terrible massacre of 20,000 Tutsis and the flight of thousands of others into Burundi and Uganda. This irreparable act was the first step towards the descent into amnesia. But a past that is forgotten is bound to repeat itself because forgetting involves a refusal to admit wrongdoing. In Rwanda, amnesia led to ▶

Rwandan writer, author of *Le piège ethnique* (Dagorno publishers, Paris, 1999)

successive pogroms against the Tutsis which began in the 1960s and ended in the genocide. The country lived for 35 years in a state of growing amnesia, dominated by the law of silence, of the unspoken, of memories collectively repressed. Silence inevitably gave rise to impunity and impunity made amnesia acceptable.

I had a hard job interviewing Tutsi survivors in 1994 because the genocide divided Rwandans into two camps—Hutus and Tutsis, the perpetrators of genocide and the rest. In Rwanda today, you are forced to be on one side or the other; there is no halfway house. Just after the genocide, the Tutsis who returned were suspicious of Tutsis who had escaped, presuming they had collaborated with the enemy to save their skins.

If you were a Hutu, you were automatically guilty of genocide, just as the Tutsis were from 1959 to 1994 considered guilty just because they happened to be Tutsi. The genocide was a crime committed between neighbours; killers and survivors of the atrocities still live side by side today. The extermination of a million people in 100 days with crude weapons like machetes, clubs, axes and hoes, could not have taken place without the participation of a massive number of people. A third of all Hutus are thought to have participated in one way or another.

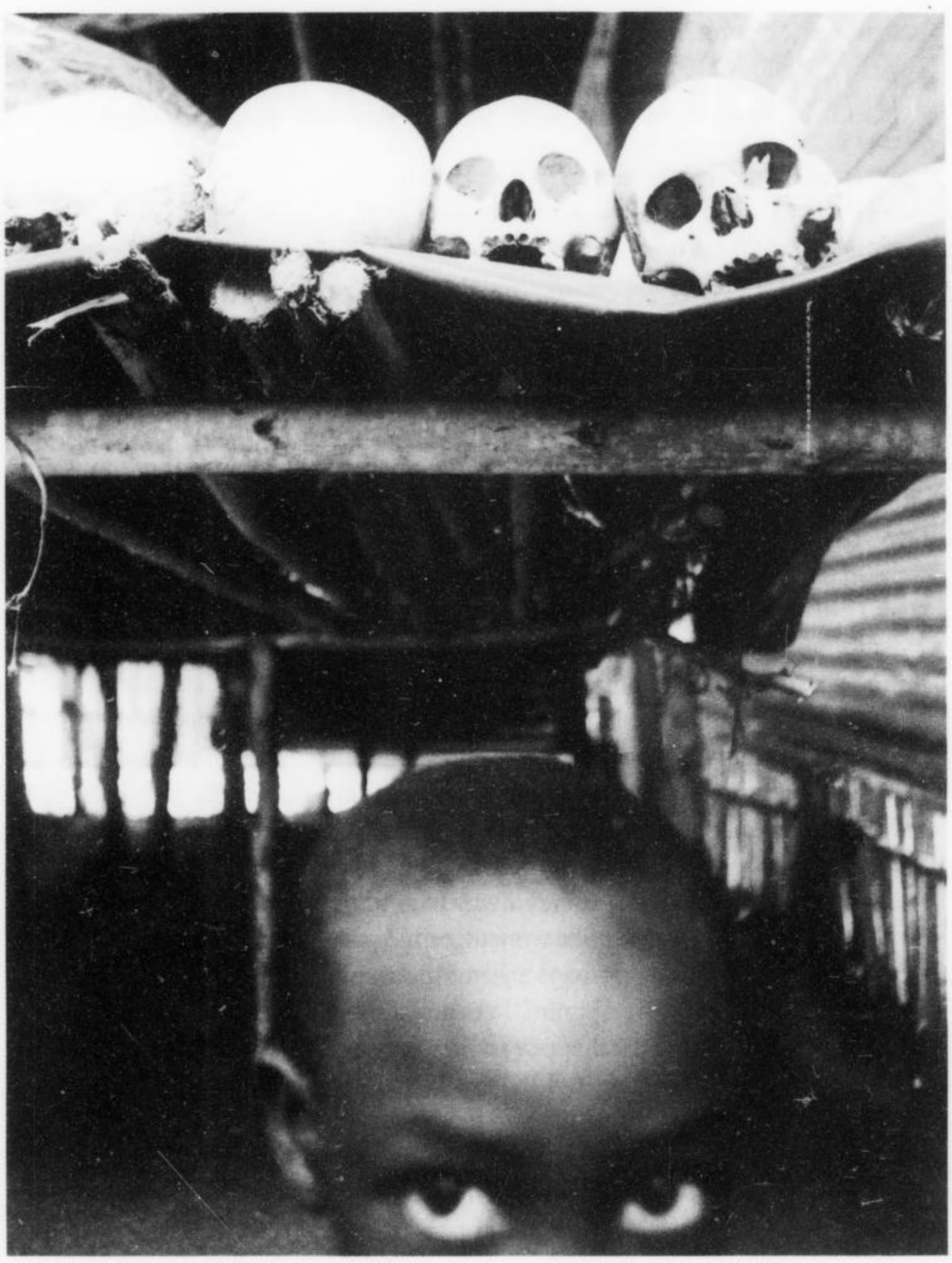
Fear of reprisals

About 135,000 people suspected of involvement in genocide are languishing in overcrowded jails, and the legal system, which was destroyed in the provinces, is finding it hard to get the trials underway. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (the Arusha Tribunal), which has scant resources, is not getting very far either. All this is keeping Rwandans from the task of remembering their past, especially since state-endorsed ethnic attitudes still condition the Hutu killers to think they killed their historic neighbours to ensure the survival of their own ethnic group. Today, the guilty flatly deny there was any genocide.

So in one of Africa's most densely populated countries, the survivors see their tormentors returning to live peacefully on the hillsides because there is not enough evidence to bring charges against them. In the first months after the genocide witnesses spoke freely, but they have become tight-lipped since a number of survivors have been murdered by unknown killers. "What's the use of giving evidence?" one victim asked me. "They're not being punished anyway." All Rwandans live in an atmosphere of ethnic mistrust. Fear of reprisals is still rife.

The new Rwandan authorities may want to curb individual score-settling and encourage national reconciliation, but the ragtag soldiers who carried out the 1994 massacres are still lurking in the forests of neighbouring Congo and have not given up their plans to exterminate the Tutsis. As long as the threat of a new genocide hangs over Rwanda, the present regime's priority will be to defend national frontiers, as shown by the on-going war in Congo.

The present is still barring the way to memory. ■



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A Rwandan boy in a Catholic church which is now a memorial to the genocide. In 1994, thousands of Tutsis were massacred in the church's grounds.

Timeline

1959: Hutus carry out a "social revolution", killing members of Rwanda's Tutsi minority and overthrowing the Tutsi monarchy. Many Tutsis flee the country. Formerly German colonies, Rwanda and Burundi have been administered by Belgium since 1924.

1962: Rwanda gains independence. Massacres of Tutsis increase and an ethnic Hutu regime is gradually established in Kigali.

1990: The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi-dominated organization, launches an offensive against the regime of General Juvenal Habyarimana, in power since 1973. In October, intervention by Zaire, Belgium and France. French troops remain in the country.

1993: An accord signed in August at Arusha (Tanzania) provides for power-sharing with the RPF. It is stalled by President Habyarimana and his political allies. The UN sends in an international peace-keeping force, UNAMIR.

1994: President Habyarimana is assassinated, setting off a wave of killings aimed at Tutsis and moderate Hutus. UNAMIR withdraws. Three months later, the French establish a "protection zone" in the southwest. The RPF forms a government of national union. In November, the UN creates an International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which sits at Arusha.

According to the Red Cross, the victims of genocide number more than a million dead, mostly Tutsis, and over two million refugees.

1999: The RPF government extends its term of office by four years, promising elections and a new constitution. ■

Bosnia and Herzegovina: an impossible reconciliation?

James Lyon

A once ethnically diverse population lives in a climate of fear and distrust fuelled by nationalists

In November 1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Dayton Peace Accords, a document designed to create a new unified state comprised of two multi-ethnic entities. It would have a functioning central government, hold democratic elections and adhere to international human rights standards. Displaced persons were to be allowed to return to their homes and indicted war criminals were to be arrested and turned over to the International Tribunal of The Hague.

Today's reality is dramatically different. The country consists of three de facto mono-ethnic entities, three separate armies, three separate police forces, and a national government that exists mostly on paper. Most indicted war criminals remain at large. Nationalist political parties, including many of the ethnic cleansers who were responsible for the war in the first place, remain securely in power. Nationalist extremists—often backed by the ruling political parties—still bomb and torch the homes of returning refugees in certain areas.

Contrary to the pronouncements of local nationalist politicians or international officials wishing to avoid taking responsibility, the Serbs, Croats and Muslims lived together relatively peacefully in Bosnia and Herzegovina for hundreds of years. All three groups respected each others' religious customs and holidays and intermarriage was common. But something changed when all sides committed grievous atrocities during the war. These crimes were not an accidental by-product of the war. Rather, they were a tool to achieve its primary aim: ethnic separatism or domination of one ethnic group over another. By the war's end in early 1996, all three sides had retreated into ethnically pure areas, controlled by their respective armies.

Today, the Croat and Serb politicians insist on remaining separate. In fact, it is those very groups responsible for the worst crimes who insist most vehemently on ethnic separation. The lack of consensus on a multiethnic society plays into the hands of Muslim extremists, who also practice a more subtle policy of ethnic exclusion. All three groups have formed their own school curricula, which reinforce ethnic hatred, blame the other groups, and glorify their own mythology. Each has begun religious instruction in the schools, which often takes the most primitive form of ethnic indoctrination. All this only serves to cement the wartime ethnic cleansing.

The sad truth is that four years after Dayton (see box), neither side is any closer to reconciliation than in late 1995. Many Bosnians of all nationalities will state openly that they can stop hating, but that they will neither forgive nor forget what happened during the war. And many add that they wish to be left alone with their own ethnic group. After what the other groups did to them, they no longer wish to live with them anyway. In a political climate that works against the emergence of any reliable non-nationalist reference point, members of all communities still fear first and foremost for the survival of their ethnic identity and place group interests above all else.

Rather than work toward calming nationalist passions and anger, local politicians use these fears to further their own political agendas. This is seen particularly in the cases of the Serb and Croat populations, both of whom look toward a mother country outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and dream of eventually seceding and uniting their region with it. From Belgrade and Zagreb, politicians continue to fan the flames of nationalist desire. The continued insistence of nationalist parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, urged on by nationalists outside, on creating ethnically pure territories stands as the greatest obstacle to reconciliation. Until the outside forces live up to their obligations under Dayton and stop pushing for "greater" national programmes, little progress will be made in the reconciliation of the country's pre-war ethnically diverse population. And until that time, its citizens will live in an environment of fear of the other ethnic groups. ■

Director of the International Crisis Group (ICG) project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This private, multinational organization, which aims to strengthen the capacity of the international community to understand and respond to crises, produces analytical reports targeted at key decision-makers. (http://www.crisisweb.org)

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Timeline

1991: Slovenia and Croatia, two of the six republics of the Yugoslav federation, declare their independence.

1992: In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croat and Muslim communities press for the independence of their republic. They are opposed by Bosnian Serbs who lay siege to Sarajevo and seize 70% of the country. Massive "ethnic cleansing" begins, mostly conducted by Bosnian Serb forces.

1993-1994: After the rejection of a peace plan by the Bosnian Serbs, the UN declares six "safe areas", but ground hostilities persist. Formerly allies, Croats and Muslims clash before signing an accord in March 1994. The UN Security Council creates an International War Crimes Tribunal for former Yugoslavia based at The Hague (Netherlands). NATO goes into action against the Serbs.

1995: In July, Bosnian Serbs take over Srebrenica and Zepa "safe areas". In August, NATO bombs their positions around Sarajevo. The Dayton (USA) peace agreement in November ends hostilities. The republic is divided into two associated entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51% of the land area, including Sarajevo) and the Serb Republic. A NATO force monitors application.

In this conflict some 200,000 people were killed and almost 200,000 were displaced. Around 600,000 refugees have returned to their homes. ■

Can we prevent crimes against humanity?

Canadian judge Louise Arbour, former chief prosecutor with the International Criminal Tribunals (ICT) for ex- Yugoslavia and Rwanda, believes international law is making great strides in violence prevention

How has setting up ICTs helped the groups of people directly concerned to turn the page on atrocities they have experienced?

These tribunals have been a spectacular innovation. For the first time, the international community has shown its concern not only with the short term—stopping armed conflict—but also with the long term. It has noted that in the Balkans and Africa's Great Lakes region there was very little hope of achieving lasting peace based on reconciliation and social reconstruction unless the truth about past events was established. The recording by international investigators of irrefutable evidence of crimes prevents history from being falsified and the past from being distorted.

When the truth is told, the need to dispense justice becomes obvious. It's very important to pin criminal responsibility for any crimes that have been committed not only on those who actually committed them but also on political and military leaders. In so doing, the law at least recognizes that the victims have a legal status and to some extent restores their dignity. It also stops them from setting themselves on a course for revenge, an agenda which can be handed down from generation to generation.

Do you feel the ICT for the former Yugoslavia has helped victims to come to terms with the burden of memory, a process which is crucial to reconciliation? In Bosnia, there's a kind of "apartheid" between communities.

The ICT has not yet contributed to reconciliation in Bosnia because it has not been given the necessary resources. Justice cannot be fully done partly because of the refusal of some governments to gather evidence and arrest people who've already been indicted.

The existence of an ICT for the former Yugoslavia doesn't seem to have prevented the events in Kosovo.

The ICT did not have an immediate deterrent effect because the UN Security Council didn't use its resources to oblige Serbia (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) to carry out the arrest warrants the ICT had issued. This encouraged the criminals to feel that in practical terms they were going to enjoy impunity and immunity. Throughout the Kosovo conflict, from January to June 1999, I repeatedly urged the international forces there to arrest people under indictment. I think this was the right deterrent message to send to the parties in Kosovo.

It's clear that those who committed crimes in Kosovo were more aware of the risk of being indicted and that this influenced their methods. The common graves in Kosovo dug up by ICT investigators have provided a lot of evidence, certainly enough to make the authors of these crimes realize that the law can always find such evidence, whatever lengths the criminals may go to in order to cover up their crimes.

How has the ICT helped to promote reconciliation in Rwanda, where people are afraid of the massacres starting again?

Military leaders, people accused of very serious responsibilities for the genocide, ministers and even the former prime minister (who has confessed his guilt) are awaiting trial in prison in Arusha, in Tanzania. They are no longer in a position to fan the flames of tension, so the risk of violence has been to some extent reduced. In Rwanda, even more than in Bosnia, the culture of impunity has existed for decades. Violence goes in cycles, but responsibility for it has not been proven. The ICT represents a change of direction in this respect but it won't have an immediate impact.

What can we expect from the proposed International Criminal Court (ICC), which will be the first permanent institution of its kind?

Setting up the ICC is a huge and irreversible step for the world. When it's up and running it will be able to respond fairly quickly to events and to indict suspected criminals before they can commit further massacres. ICTs were set up after crimes were committed in Bosnia, Croatia and Rwanda. But in Kosovo, indictments were made at the highest level at the beginning of June 1999 for crimes committed between January and May. Such speed was possible because the ICT and its infrastructure were already in place.

So an ICC, if it has the necessary muscle, will be able to act and intervene in real time, which is an enormous step forward. If there's the political will to arrest people who've been indicted, effective prevention of crimes against humanity can be envisaged. ■

Interview by Martine Jacot,
UNESCO Courier journalist

POLICE AGAINST RACISM

Asbel López

Training schemes in several European countries are getting to grips with the stereotyping and prejudice that all too often influence police behaviour

In a vast salon in Monceau Castle (Belgium), 13 policemen from Charleroi, a town in the centre of the country, have been divided into teams and are absorbed in a boisterous card game. The officers, unarmed and wearing civilian clothes, are all men in their forties. Today, in early October, they are taking part in the fourth session of a workshop against racism and xenophobia run by the Centre for Equal Opportunity and the Fight Against Racism, a Brussels-based public institution founded in 1993.

Laughter erupts from the policemen and the Centre's two instructors when the winners of each game go on to the next round of the contest. This time they will be playing a game according to rules none of them will know.

© Marie-Pierre Despret/ Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le recisme, Brussels

Belgian police inspector Nestor Van Villinghen with a young immigrant. This photo and those on the following pages show scenes from a video used in Belgian police training courses.

A game with unknown rules

Jean, who has spent half his 42 years in the police force, says this is what happens to immigrants when "they arrive in a country without knowing the rules and when the rules they have back home are no use because they don't work in the new society."

For example, he says, rules for women in Islamic countries are very different from those in the West. Later on, during a review of the session, Jean says he has never had the chance to talk about such things or discuss the relationship he has with immigrants in the course of his work.

The workshop is one of 11 projects that nine European countries are carrying out under an international programme called NGOs and Police Against Prejudice (NAPAP), set up by the European Commission in 1997 to fight racism and xenophobia through workshops for members of the police.

Each country has its own priorities and methods. As part of the British project members of minority ethnic groups are invited to take part in the training courses. The Catalans hold day courses for their police run by local immigrant groups. France stresses the social integration of immigrants. In Germany emphasis is laid on making police more aware of the problems that arise in a multicultural society.

In recent years racism and xenophobia have increased in many European countries, especially because of economic crisis, unemployment, a rise in the immigrant population and anti-foreigner propaganda by extreme right-wing parties who are getting more and more votes[1]. In this situation, police forces are in a particularly exposed position.

The Centre, which records and pursues cases of racist behaviour, says that in Belgium more complaints about discrimination based on the origin of an individual are laid against the police than against any other group[2]. The situation is also troubling in other European countries. In Britain, a report by a former High Court judge, Sir William Macpherson, said in early 1999 that there was "institutionalized racism" in London's Metropolitan police force. In Germany, an official survey showed that police violence against foreigners was "not just a matter of isolated cases". Amnesty International's 1999 report detailed abuses by the police in France, Spain, Greece and Switzerland against immigrants and members of ethnic minorities.

In a democratic system, such things should not happen and the police should respect the principle of equal rights for all citizens. To ensure such respect, the first thing to be done is to see that stereotyping and prejudice do not affect the professional behaviour of the police. This is not easy because police opinions and attitudes are developed at first hand in the front line of social conflict, and are usually the result of an accumulation of personal experiences, frustrations and misunderstandings.

The workshops run by the Belgian centre are special because they feature group work drawing on personal experience and incidents the policemen agree to talk about. ▶

UNESCO Courier journalist

1. The recent electoral successes of the extreme right in Austria and Switzerland illustrate this process.

2. *Égaux et reconnus, bilan 1993-1998 et perspectives de la politique des immigrés et de la lutte contre le racisme*, Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, page 16, Brussels, 1999.

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► The starting point of the six-day course is not a lecture on tolerance or study of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but contributions from the policemen during activities including card games, role-playing, and looking at photos and film extracts.

Marisa Fella, an instructor at the Centre, says these "apparently simple" exercises encourage serious reflection by the policemen about their professional behaviour. She remembers one occasion when solving a puzzle opened up the subject of communication and aggressivity and eventually turned into a debate about police brutality. "They discussed their own violent behaviour as policemen, when and why they had been violent or not violent, and how they dealt with violence by officers under their orders." A "forum for talking and thinking" was opened and allowed them to distance themselves from their jobs, something which can be hard to do when you are in the thick of things.

A forum for talking and thinking

Bit by bit, as confidence is built up, the participants stop using official jargon and begin to recognize nuances. For example, when one policeman said he could not accept the position of women in Islam, this was already a step forward, because he was beginning to distinguish between wholesale rejection of Muslims and his disapproval of one aspect of their culture.

Fella says the most heartening aspect of her work is to see that "behind the uniforms there are human beings who ask themselves questions about their profession and about how they do their jobs." Just speaking freely and openly about these issues is already a big step, she says, because "putting things into words and talking about them allows you to be more objective about them, to realize their seriousness and importance and to start thinking about them."

This was not happening when she started the Centre's workshops six years ago. At that time, training focused on the immigrant, not the police. The aim was to

'Behind the uniforms there are human beings who ask themselves questions about their profession and about how they do their jobs'

throw light on the culture of immigrants' countries of origin, how they had come to Belgium, population statistics and the significance of religious festivals like Ramadan or practices like wearing the chador, the shawl or veil worn by Muslim women.

But the Centre's officials soon noticed that this kind of information session not only failed to make the police aware of cultural diversity but was even counter-productive. The policemen got the impression that by explaining how immigrants lived, the instructors were trying to justify behaviour that to them was unacceptable. They felt they were being made fun of and this generated great hostility towards the course organizers.

Their comments were brutal. "The instructors think we're ignorant and therefore racist. . . . They give us nice little talks about immigrants, as if they're all nice and friendly, but they've never patrolled the streets like we have."

These days, such resistance has disappeared or at least has subsided. The door to change has opened. But problems still exist. The police say they do not know exactly how to put into practice what they have learned in the workshops about conflict management, non-verbal communication and handling aggression when they are back doing their job, which nearly always involves speed, stress and confusion.

Another big problem is the programme's lack of resources. The Centre has just five instructors, three of them full-time. Only about 300 of Belgium's 36,200 police and gendarmes attended workshops like these between 1994 and 1998. A medium-term proposal to overcome this is to have the current instructors train new ones.

Another weak point is that it's senior officers who ask for courses to be held for their men, who are not necessarily stationed in places where the incidence of racial discrimination is high. What's more, the entire staff of a police station rarely attends the course, and this causes friction when they go back to work.

But despite everything, those who take part agree that the process of exchange and discussion between instructors and police is encouraging.

Long-term effects

One instructor tells a group that five volunteers are needed for a role-playing game in which three policemen will play the part of young immigrants and two others will be the police. The first volunteers are those who want to play the immigrants.

When the two policemen pass the group of "immigrants", the policeman playing the part of Fabio, an 18-year-old Belgian citizen of Mediterranean origin, calls them "*poulets*" (chickens) a French slang word meaning "cops". The two policemen immediately turn round to arrest the youths, while their friends laugh at a nickname that, as police, they have all been called at one time or another.

When this episode is discussed afterwards, some of the policemen say they would have just kept on walking and not arrested anyone for "such a trivial matter". Another notes that a few years ago, the youths would have had their ears boxed.

The instructor uses the episode to show how the idea of what constitutes an insult can change over the years, pointing out that this is not just a subjective matter and that

Sensitive issues are discussed in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

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© Marie-Pierre Despret/ Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le recisme, Brussels

Group work drawing on personal experience is a key feature of the Belgian police training courses against racism and xenophobia.

the students gradually come to see the connection between what they learn in the classroom and real-life situations.

Before continuing, one of the instructors explains to the police that they were called "chickens" because Paris police headquarters is built on the site of an old chicken farm. "Really?" murmurs one of them who had no idea of this, while his colleagues laugh.

François Delor, a psychiatrist and instructor at the Centre, thinks this reaction is important from a methodological standpoint. "Laughter," he says, "is a way of avoiding confrontation. Laughing together is sharing a kind of intimacy and that makes it possible to work together in a climate of trust."

The instructor's job is to monitor everything that is said and done during the sessions and also to spot certain expressions, put them in a broader context and use that to break down prejudices.

Fred, who has spent 17 of his 40 years as a policeman, tells how he was once given what he thought was a "stupid" order to arrest all the Gypsies in the market in Charleroi. But a colleague supported the order, saying that "regular checks, especially of Gypsies, will curb crime." Fred retorted that "my job isn't to arrest Gypsies just because they're Gypsies" and said it would be better to deploy plain-clothes police who could catch thieves red-handed, whether they were foreigners or Belgians. Fred's story about the clearly xenophobic aspect of an order is more effective in combating racist attitudes than any speech because it does not come from one of the instructors but from a fellow policeman.

Amid jokes and friendly chat in a convivial atmosphere, sensitive and serious subjects are raised quite easily. But how can we be sure these policemen will incorporate into their professional lives some of the things they have seen and heard in these workshops and behave more fairly towards immigrants in general?

'Laughter is a way of avoiding confrontation. Laughing together is sharing a kind of intimacy which makes it possible to work together in a climate of trust'

Delor is firmly convinced that exchanges like these have positive effects which may some day influence the minds of these men and change the way they act. "Words and exchanges which seem unimportant sometimes have surprising effects in the long term." He adds that people tend to absorb as a "potential cognitive resource" scattered elements whose utility may not be obvious at the time.

This seems to be confirmed by Christian Raes, an assistant police commissioner in Brussels. In an interview in the Belgian daily newspaper *Le Matin* in July 1999, he said that during the training at the Centre "bonds were forged between members of the group and something of that has remained. I haven't changed dramatically, but sometimes I look at things in a different way and also try to spend a bit more time listening to my men."

The Centre's workshops are undoubtedly helping the fight against racism and xenophobia. But changing behaviour patterns that are deeply rooted in a society is a long-haul job whch depends, as ever, on the enthusiasm and determination of everyone. ■

Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme
Rue de la Loi, 155 Résidence Palace
1040 Brussels.
Tel: (32 2) 233 06 11
email: centre@antiracisme.be
http://www.antiracisme.be

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THE YEAR 2000: WHO'S COMING TO THE PARTY?

Jasmina Sopova

From Osaka to San Francisco, from Beijing to Moscow and Pretoria, millennium fever seems to have gripped most–but not all–of the planet

At midnight on December 31, the world will enter the year 2000. For months, sometimes years, plans have been made to celebrate this special New Year's Eve, especially in the Christian world. But what, if anything, does the date mean to non-Christians?

"December 31 may herald a new year, a new century and a new millennium, but for me it'll just be a normal day," says an amused P. Balasubramanian, the chief accountant of a large firm in the Indian city of Madras.

For a large part of humanity, the arrival of the year 2000 will pass completely unnoticed. But because globalization means following trends or simply because there is money to be made, many people have yielded to the temptation to join the festivities.

Marketing the millennium

In India, advertising razzmatazz orchestrated by millennium marketeers has reached most of the population, thanks to satellite television. New Delhi is staging a "Millennium Night Celebration". Railway stationmasters will blow their whistles to send trains off on prestigious trips around the sub-continent. In most of India's major tourist centres, from Agra, Khajuraho and Jaipur, all the hotels are booked up. Yet for many Indians, mostly Hindus, there is really little to get worked up about.

According to the *Vikram Samvat*, the calendar of the Hindus and Sikhs of northern and western India, we are already in the year 2055, while the *Shaka*, the country's most widely used Hindu calendar, only clocks up 1920. As Indian Catholics mark the end of 1999, Buddhists will be enjoying the year 2542 and Muslims the year 1420 of the Hegira. A hundred years ago, according to another ancient Hindu calendar, the sixth millennium of the *Kaliyuga* era began, supposedly the world's last (see box).

Unesco Courier journalist

When all's said and done, only the wealthiest and most westernized Indians really feel concerned by the millennium celebrations. "It's a legacy of colonial times and a product of marketing," says Bhupinder Singh, a practising Sikh who has retired from the higher civil service and become a businessman. But he admits he has gone along with it all. He is promoting Pakistan's most famous classical singer, Shafqat Ali Khan, in India with the slogan "The Star of the Millennium".

Another "star" is the island of Katchall, one of the Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal, which will be the first place in India to see the sunrise on New Year's Day 2000. The ministry of culture is cashing in on the event (as well as making up for India's lack of infrastructure) by inviting seven luxury ships from all over the world to anchor off the Nicobar Islands for the big moment.

Other ships are being encouraged to go to Tonga, in the middle of the Pacific near the international dateline. To attract them, Tongan King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV has decreed a switch to summer daylight saving time on October 3, thereby gaining 14 hours over Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and making the archipelago the first place on earth to enter the "third millennium". This kind of thing has been done in the past. When Pope Gregory XIII shortened the year 1582 by 10 days as part of his reform of the Julian calendar, it meant that St Teresa of Avila died during the night of the 4th to the . . . 15th of October.

Weddings and marathons

The U.S. Marine Observatory in Thailand has put forward the controversial theory that the sun will rise at 7 a.m. on January 1 above the frontier between Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand and that this will be "the best place in the world to see in the millennium." But while the Thais have a front seat for the big show, they may be giving it a miss. Like Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, Thailand is a country where Theravada Buddhism is practised; it celebrated its third millennium 543 years ago. What's more, Thailand marks the new year in mid-April, during *Songkran*, the water festival.

All the same, some attempts are being made to stir up enthusiasm for the year 2000. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is organizing events with a "new millennium" tag—millennium weddings for 2,000 couples, a millennium marathon and a big seaside concert. But in Southeast Asia, which is struggling to recover from a two-year economic crisis, the "new millennium" is on the whole generating little real interest or extravagant projects. TAT says there has been a 30 per cent increase in

CALENDARS FOR ALL:

We are in the year:

- 11 of the Heisei era, which corresponds to the reign of Japanese Emperor Akihito.
- 1420 of the Hegira, the Muslim era, which begins on the day when the prophet Muhammad left Mecca and went to Medina.
- 1999 of the Gregorian calendar. Used all over the world, it is named after Pope Gregory XIII, who reformed the Julian calendar in 1582. The Julian calendar was itself a reform of the Roman calendar (starting from the date of the foundation of Rome) instituted by Julius Caesar. The Julian calendar began to be observed by Christians in the year 532, when the Church fixed the start of the Christian era as the presumed day of Christ's birth.
- 5100 of the *Kaliyuga* era, the "age of conflicts". According to Brahman cosmogony this is the last cosmic phase of human history. It is considered to have begun in 3102 B.C. at the end of the Great War which is the main topic of the *Mahâbhârata* epic. The era is supposed to end in the year 428,999.
- 5543 of the Buddhist era, which commemorates the death of Buddha.
- 5760 of the Jewish calendar, which is based on the Babylonian calendar, that starts from the supposed date of the creation of the world. ■

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The church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. To mark the year 2000, the Palestinian Authority has launched a major construction and renovation programme in the town.

hotel reservations for December compared with December 1998, but nearly all of them have been by foreigners.

Japan has followed the Western calendar since 1873, as part of the modernization process it embarked on during the Meiji Era. Until then, the country had used the lunar-solar *Taiintaiyoreki* calendar dating from the Nara Era (645-794), Japanese civilization's golden age. For nearly a century, though, the Japanese, especially those living in the countryside, went on celebrating the "old" New Year as well as the new one. And since tradition demands that time is measured again from zero whenever a new emperor comes to the throne, the Japanese followed three different calendars at the same time.

These days the *Taiintaiyoreki* is only observed by a few sentimental folk and New Year is celebrated on December 31. But though calendars come and go, traditions remain. And so the Japanese will be marking the New Year as their ancestors did, with ancient games and decorations, formal clothes and special "lucky" food dishes.

One well-known restaurateur has announced grandly he will make a *Tale of Genji* meal, referring to a famous 1,000-year-old classic novel. On the menu will be 35 dishes for four gourmets. All for a mere $8,000. More accessible will be the wildly popular television programme *Kohaku Uta Gassen*, a contest between the year's best male and female singers, which most Japanese watch every December 31—especially this year when the Y2K computer bug will encourage people to stay at home.

To the west of the Land of the Rising Sun, the new Gregorian year will be greeted with typical panache in China. Beijing city council has gone to great expense, helped by generous donors in Hong Kong, to build a "Chinese Altar of the Century". The building complex, which includes several exhibition halls, has cost some $24 million and mobilized some 200 architects and art historians. The rotating altar, 47 metres across, has a huge stage which can accommodate more than a thousand singers and dancers. You enter it through a 300-metre-long "Tunnel of Time", decorated inside with bronze reliefs showing scenes from the country's 5,000-year history.

But the older generation prefer to wait until February to celebrate the start of the Year of the Dragon, and remote provinces will mostly ignore the fuss about the third millennium. Young people however can't wait for New Year's Eve, and brush aside the rebukes of the ardent defenders of the Chinese calendar who publicly oppose this "biblical" anniversary, as well as the insistence of astronomers, who have taken the matter seriously and are trying to explain that the new millennium will not in fact arrive until a year later.

Indeed, in a calendar beginning with ▸

Chen Fei © Xinhua, Beijing

In Shanghai, a young couple watch the Bell of the Century.

the year 1, a new century does not strictly begin until the year 101, and so on until 2001. The Gregorian calendar in its present form has only existed for 418 years, and it is really 2,044 years old when seen as a direct descendant of the Julian calendar. What's more, Christ was actually born a few years before the official Christian date of his birth. So perhaps it's not surprising that young Confucians, Buddhists, Taoists, Muslims, Christians and atheists have concluded that the year 2000 just represents a worldwide desire to enter the new millennium as quickly as possible—celebrating and making money at the same time—and are keen to take part.

The same enthusiasm can be found in the Jordan valley. On the Israeli side there is "Nazareth 2000" and on the Palestinian side "Bethlehem 2000". Luckily the share-out of the holy places is fair to the two peoples which, despite the small number of Christians among them, are doing up these sites, which date back to the dawn of Christianity.

In a region with so many celebrations, there are countless welcoming banners. After celebrations to mark the 3,000th anniversary of Jerusalem and 50 years of Israeli history have been played down because of the stalled peace process, Israel's Lod international airport is building an extension called "Ben Gurion 2000" (after the country's first prime minister) to welcome the pilgrims who, between this Christmas and Easter 2001, will climb the Via Dolorosa which symbolizes the life of Christ.

Will there be six million of them, as the Vatican predicts, or three to four million as Israel has provided for, or the 2.5 million foreseen by the pessimists, who are preparing for only a 20 per cent increase in tourist numbers?

Storm in a wine-glass?

For Bethlehem, the year 2000 is an economically important one. Experts forecast that the influx of tourists will boost the income of the Palestinian population by $100 per capita during the year. The World Bank has asked donor countries to beat the Three Wise Men to it in Bethlehem, by providing $85 million to do up the town. The private sector has also come up with funds to build 6,000 extra hotel rooms.

But the millennium has also produced some inappropriate tidings. A world away from the rosaries, the merchants of the Temple have had the ultimate bad taste to offer a "Jerusalem 2000" Cabernet wine. Its label shows the Dome of the Rock, Islam's third most holy place (after Mecca and Medina) despite the fact that Islam prohibits consumption of alcohol. A storm in a wine-glass? The matter has been taken up with the Arab League.

In the Arab world, Egypt has decided to be the champion celebrant of the millennium, and is avoiding any religious overtones. The occasion coincides with the start of ancient Egypt's seventh millennium, so the celebrations will naturally take place at the foot of the Giza pyramids. More than a thousand performers will gather on a 20,000-square-metre stage and join Jean-Michel Jarre, a French composer who specializes in mega-events, to present *The 12 Dreams of the Sun*.

The producers are happy, as the $9.5 million spent on the project will be recovered from some 50,000 people expected to attend with tickets ranging from $150 to $400 apiece. Such sums are beyond the reach of most young Egyptians, who will be able to have a "place in the sun" for a more modest amount.

The concert will begin at dusk on the last day of 1999 and continue until dawn on the first day of 2000. When the first ray of the sun appears in the Egyptian sky, a nine-metre-high golden pyramid will be placed on the Cheops pyramid to mark the birth of the "new millennium".

Happy New Year! ■

With contributions from Indian journalist Utpal Borpujari (New Delhi), Thai journalist Wanphen Sresthaputra (Bangkok), Paris-based Japanese journalist Missawa Kano, Chinese journalists Li Xiguang and Huang Yan (Beijing) and French journalist Claudine Meyer (Israel)

INTERNATIONAL RADIO MAKES NEW WAVES

Cynthia Guttman

Once the sole source of outside news for many countries, international public broadcasters have had to adapt to a new competitive environment

In Budapest (Hungary), British, French and German public radio broadcasters are making a joint bid to open an FM station in 2000. The venture is emblematic of the new world in which international radios are navigating. Almost overnight, the fall of the Iron Curtain radically called into question the traditional mission of these broadcasters—to send an oxygen balloon of information to citizens living in one-party states or under repressive regimes.

Not that this mission has lost its relevance. Afghanistan and China are among Voice of America's top five markets, and in the latter jamming is standard practice, a measure of the broadcaster's undesirable influence, at least by Chinese government standards. In times of crisis such as the recent Kosovo conflict, audiences surge. Faced with the most drastic budget cuts in the history of German public broadcasting in 1999, Deutsche Welle's director general Dieter Weirich remained adamant about the mission of an international service: "Two thirds of humanity live in countries without freedom of the press or information. We regard it as our particular duty to provide them with uninterrupted objective information from credible sources."

A buoy for freedom

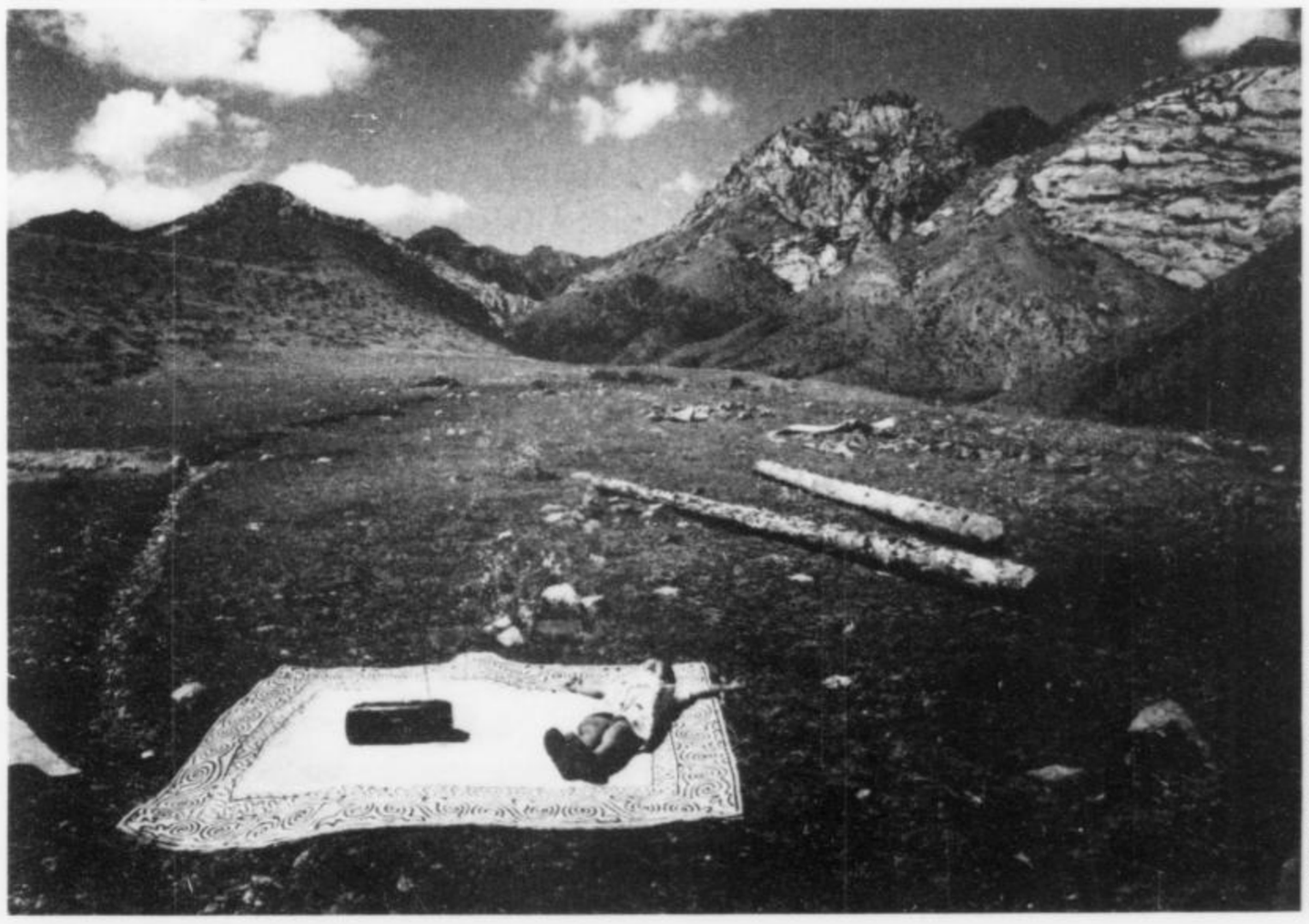
But in many parts of the world, the end of the Cold War has taken a time-old ideological edge off the equation, forcing international broadcasters to adjust rapidly to a radically new, more fragmented environment. No longer can they claim to be the sole alternative to censored government broadcasts; no longer are they viewed as a freedom buoy to some, a subversive force to others. Furthermore, in numerous developing countries, newly elected governments have yielded control over the airwaves, often opening the way for a plurality of opinions to be expressed on new FM (frequency modulation) stations.

"Because of a different political context, radios whose main goal was to provide information to countries that didn't have access to any outside news sources have had to change their tune and develop on transmission mediums other than short wave," explains Hugues Salord, director of international affairs at Radio France Internationale. In a sense, they have had to learn to "sell themselves" on markets with entirely different cultures and expectations, be it in Europe, Africa, Asia or Latin America. In short, external broadcasters have had to become both local and international.

The process of adapting to open markets has been tantamount to an intensive immersion course for external broadcasters. In a deregulated audiovisual landscape, the first move for all broadcasters was to strike up partnerships with FM stations around the world for rebroadcast of their programmes, or to acquire FM transmitters to set up local frequencies, a more expensive option. As a medium, FM represents a quantum quality leap over crackly short wave, allowing broadcasters to speak faster and insert music into programmes.

The BBC, according to the World Service's European news and current affairs editor Mark Brayne, was "streets ahead of almost anybody else" in building up FM networks, starting with Finland in 1987. In 1990, the World Service was in Romania just after the fall of the Communist regime signing deals with emerging radio stations and has built up a network of 97 local rebroadcasters. A recent study shows that the British broadaster has captured 17 per cent of the Romanian radio audience: "We have become a national broadcaster in a sense. We cover Romanian news in quite some detail but with BBC journalistic ▶

In the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang (People's Republic of China) a Mongolian boy listens to the radio in uplands near the border with Kazakhstan.



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Unesco Courier journalist, with additional reporting from Canada by Anne Pelouas

values embedded into a solid analytical fare of international news,"says Brayne.

Africa, where broadcast markets deregulated faster than in Asia, is a particularly coveted zone. Wherever an external broadcaster can get onto FM, audiences shoot up. The BBC and RFI pull in huge audiences in their former African colonies while Ethiopia ranks among VOA's top five markets. RFI has started to open up FM relays outside West African capitals, in the second and third largest cities, and is introducing locally produced programmes in the Bambara language in Mali.

"RFI is practically perceived as a full-fledged national radio service, with audience scores of up to 30 to 40 per cent of the French-speaking population," says Erlends Calabuig, director of foreign languages. The French broadcaster is now trying to make inroads outside the francophone zone, with the recent opening of an FM station in Ghana and one to follow in Lagos. "There is a clear desire for countries in the region to break away from their zone of traditonal cultural influence," says Salord. "I think anglophone Africa is taking a growing interest in the francophone world, not only in a linguistic sense, but also from a political, economic and cultural standpoint."

Demand for accurate information

Clearly, there is a strong demand for external broadcasters, and not only as providers of international news. "There is far greater competition on a large number of markets, but not always for accurate and impartial news," says Caroline Thomson, deputy chief executive of the BBC World Service. "In many countries, a lot of music stations have come on the air as a result of dergulation, but news is quite heavily regulated or of very poor quality and subject to considerable local interference."

Voice of America's director Sandy Unger concurs that there is a strong demand in emerging democracies for balanced and accurate information. "Where media are not fully developed, where there are criminal libel laws and all sorts of constraints on free flow of information, reliable information very often has to come from the outside," he affirms. Evidence seems to speak for itself. Pointing to VOA's 400 affiliate FM stations in Latin America, he asks: "Why are they signing up for this if there is no need, if they were confident that information is being provided in their societies?"

While all the major broadcasters are present on local FMs, they each have a mission to uphold. The BBC World Service stands by its reputation for trust and quality, repeatedly singled out in its audience surveys. Voice of America, which became an independent federal entity in October, upholds its mandate to report on world news and on American politics, society and culture. RFI prides itself on presenting a French reading of the news that reflects the diversity of opinion in the country. DW's director Dieter Weirich underlines the broadcaster's role in "forming an international awareness about the new modern Germany." But how this mission is carried out has changed, because FM calls for a more upbeat, interactive style of programming than short-wave broadcasting. And because FM stations are locally based, broadcasters have to understand and cultivate their niche audiences.

"It is really a matter of zooming in," explains RFI's Calabuig. "We have moved away from reaching an indiscriminate mass of listeners via one means of transmission spanning the whole globe to a focus on proximity, which means catering to the expectations of listeners." While international news remains the backbone of all the broadcasters' programming and has been significantly expanded over the past few years to provide round-the-clock coverage, menus have also become more eclectic, mixing music and features adapted to different regions. Local production has taken on a heightened importance.

From 1989 onwards, the BBC started recruiting younger people in the former Eastern bloc who were familiar with the target area. In Bucharest and Sofia, RFI's subsidiaries broadcast a mix of locally produced programmes along with others from Paris offering a more Franco-European angle on events. There is a strong conviction, voiced by all European external broadcasters, that they have a role to play in "accompanying a dialogue between Central and Eastern European countries, to offer an opening onto Europe," as Calabuig puts in. And there is also a common responsibility towards building a unified Europe: Radio E, a current events programme, is put together with contributions from several public European broadcasters, giving listeners a richer reading of regional issues.

Local language broadcasting

Broadcasting in local languages is one of the keys to reaching new audiences. RFI's efforts to break into anglophone Africa will be stalled until the broadcaster can afford to move into local languages, namely Swahili and Hausa, as VOA, BBC and DW have all done. The BBC has introduced several languages spoken in the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union, notably Uzbek, Azeri, Ukrainian, Kazakh and Kyrgyz. At the same time, it has shut down other language services—mostly vernacular languages in Western Europe—which doesn't necessarily mean loss of influence.

The BBC's strategy is to target elites, and more often than not this can be done in English. "When we have cut languages, it's tended to be because we thought that they were no longer effective rather than because our budget had been slashed," says Thomson. The BBC's most recent decision to pull out of German was taken after studies showed that most of the broadcaster's audience in the German-speaking world listened to its programmes in English. In the U.S., the World Service's audience has even recorded growth in recent years.

Faced with cutbacks, DW is ending its programmes in Japanese and Spanish, and is in the process of closing several other language services, including Czech, Slovak and Hungarian, judging that the countries where these languages are spoken are now "established democracies with a great variety of media available". It is however expanding its Russian and English-language programmes, and aims to make headway in the Asian market via the AsiaSat 2 satellite. Regardless of budget constraints, all the major players have introduced broadcasts in Albanian and Macedonian, reflecting the priority they put on being on air as fast as possible when political circumstances warrant.

Introducing new languages may be at the heart of broadcasters' strategies in emerging democracies and developing countries, but it costs money. While all broadcasters underline their editorial independence from government, they all rely on them for funding, and

INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING'S BIG LEAGUE

BBC World Service: 1,120 hours reaching 143 million listeners weekly in 43 languages; budget: £175 million ($280 million)

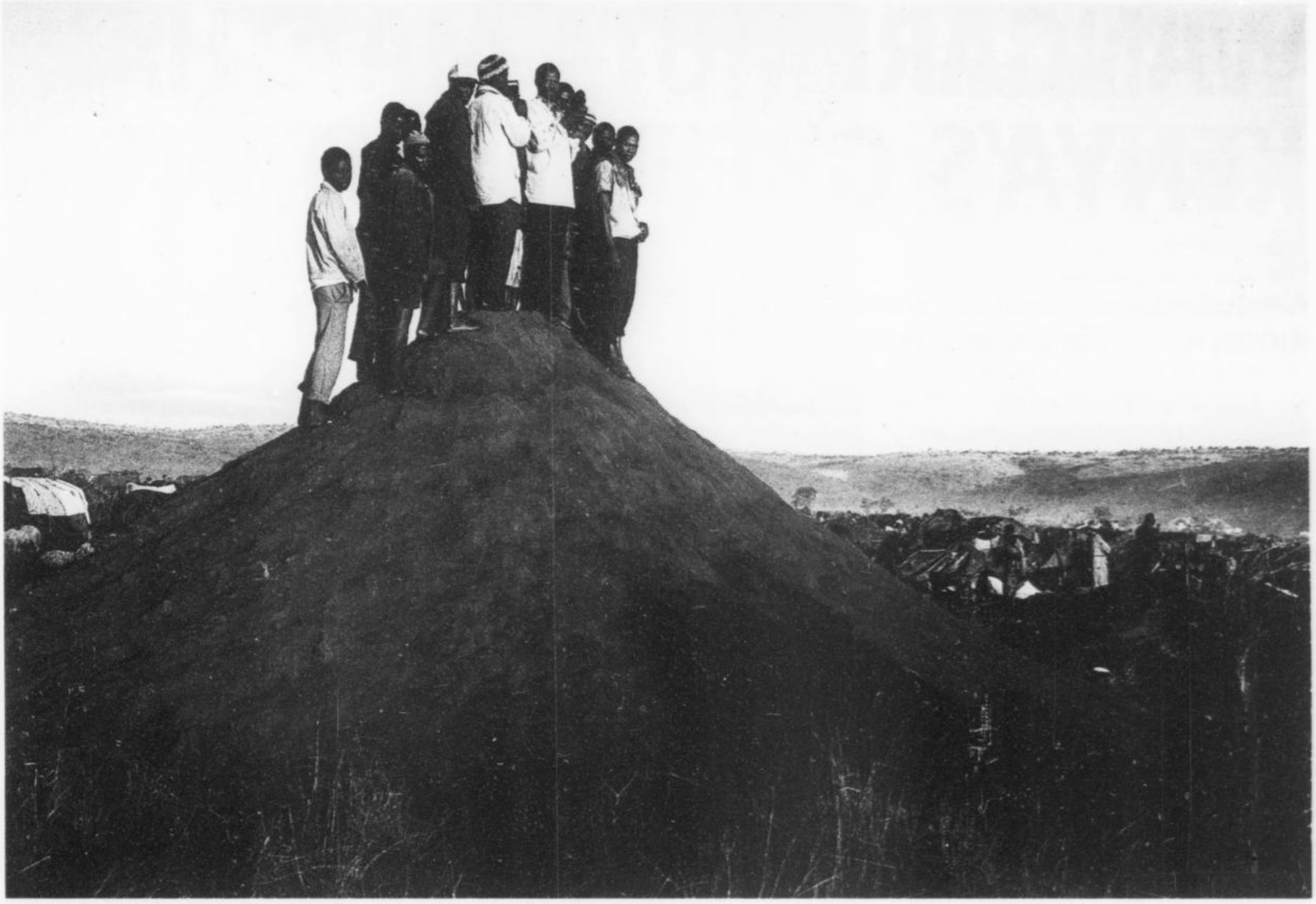
VOA (Voice of America): 870 hours reaching 91 million listeners weekly in 53 languages; budget: $106 million*

DW (Deutsche Welle): 718 hours reaching 28 million listeners weekly in 36 languages; budget: DM606 million ($336.6 million)

RFI (Radio France Internationale)**: 313 hours reaching 45 million listeners weekly in 20 languages; budget: FF754 million ($125.6 million)

*Salaries and reporting costs only. Excludes transmission costs.

** Including its subsidiary, RMC Moyen Orient.



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In Tanzania, Rwandan Hutu refugees stand on a mound to get better radio reception.

none has been graced with a generous influx over the past decade. VOA's director Sandy Unger fears "dramatic cuts" if Congress only grants the service a straightline budget for fiscal 2000, which would mean absorbing a 4.8 per cent cost of living increase. The World Service's budget has declined in real terms over the past eight years. RFI's has been stable. DW's budget for 1999 was reduced by DM 30 million ($16.6 million/4.7 per cent), and will be slashed by a further 10 per cent to DM 546 million ($302.3 million), up to the year 2003—seemingly a turnabout from last year, when the newly elected government promised "an improvement in the way the country represents itself to the outside world" according to Weirich. Besides six language closures, over 700 jobs are to be cut.

In the early 1990s, Radio Canada Internationale (RCI), a smaller player on the world stage, cut seven of its 15 languages and shrunk its staff, and nearly went off the air in 1996 when it was was saved at the eleventh hour by a federal government grant. Florian Sauvageau, a professor at Laval University (Canada), argues that the crisis reflected the government's lack of interest in international cultural relations. RCI now aims to put forward the country's economic strength and cultural diversity, and is boosting broadcasting to China and Africa.

In this belt-tightening environment, one of the dilemmas is how to be present on all fronts. In politically sensitive zones, external radios have to maintain a short-wave presence in addition to their FM frequencies and satellite broadcasting. Then comes investment in new technologies. The Internet is top priority for all public broadcasters. "It's the short wave of the future," affirms Thomson. "The trouble with FM is that you are very susceptible to local pressures," she continues, noting that at any one time, the World Service has a couple of FM stations off the air because an item has offended the powers in place. "If you are looking at how to maintain vibrant international broadcasting in 20 years time, you've got to invest in the Internet now. It's a much freer medium."

Digitalizing short wave

Thanks to the net, Indian and Pakistani communities in Britain can, for example, access programmes in Hindi and Urdu. Vietnamese can do the same in their own language, whether they are in the U.S. or Vietnam. All broadcasters are also keeping a close watch on Worldspace—direct reception via satellite on individual dishes allowing for an exceptional quality—and the imminent digitalization of short wave, which is likely to give this medium a new lease on life. Digitalized shortwave will not only ensure higher listening quality, but also reduce production costs, allowing for a burst of new stations to go on air and cater to increasingly specific audience segments.

Many of the countries where deregulation is underway inherited state broadcasting services from their former imperial powers. Now, the latter are helping the liberalization process along, often by providing training courses and technical assistance. RFI recalls that its launch of the first FM station in Dakar (Senegal) in 1991 played a significant role in "opening up and enriching the radio landscape and reinvigorating national public radio." For VOA's Unger, in a number of developing countries, "international broadcasters are serving as an example of what can be developed." Whichever technology wins out—and colossal investments are at stake—only contents can give external broadcasters the cutting edge. Their greatest asset, for Salord, lies in their expertise, know-how and worldwide network of correspondents. "International radio broadcasters have a role to play in decrypting the complexity of the world we live in. This is our job, not to give value judgments or lessons but to provide facts and elements that help the listener in forming his or her own opinion." ■

WANGARI MUTA MAATHAI: KENYA'S GREEN MILITANT

A noted environmental and pro-democracy activist hopes the next millennium will see a new African leadership that puts people first

You once said that the quality of the environment cannot be improved unless and until the living conditions of ordinary people are improved. Could you enlarge on this?

If you want to save the environment you should protect the people first, because human beings are part of biological diversity. And if we can't protect our own species, what's the point of protecting tree species?

It sometimes looks as if poor people are destroying the environment. But they are so preoccupied with their survival that they are not concerned about the long-term damage they are doing to the environment simply to meet their most basic needs.

So it is ironic that the poor people who depend on the environment are also partly responsible for its destruction. That's why I insist that the living conditions of the poor must be improved if we really want to save our environment.

For example, in certain regions of Kenya, women walk for miles to get firewood from the forests, as there are no trees left nearby. When fuel is in short supply, women have to walk further and further to find it. Hot meals are served less frequently, nutrition suffers, and hunger increases. If these women had enough resources they would not be depleting valuable forest.

What is at stake in the forests of Kenya and East Africa today?

Since the beginning of this century, there has been a clear tendency to cut down indigenous forests and to replace them with exotic species for commercial exploitation. We've now become more aware of what this involves and have realized that it was wrong to cut down indigenous forests, thereby destroying our rich biological diversity. But much damage has already been done.

When the Green Belt Movement (see box page 47) started its campaign in 1977 to plant trees, Kenya had about 2.9 per cent of forest cover. Today the forested area has further dwindled to around two per cent. We are losing more trees than we are planting.

The other important issue is that the East African environment is very vulnerable. We are very close to the Sahara desert, and experts have been warning that the desert could expand southwards like a flood if we keep on felling trees indiscriminately, since trees prevent soil erosion caused by rain and wind. By clearing remaining patches of forests we are in essence creating many micro-Sahara deserts. We can already see evidence of this phenomenon.

'The act of planting trees conveys a simple message. It suggests that at the very least you can plant a tree and improve your habitat. It increases people's awareness that they can take control of their environment, which is the first step toward greater participation in society'

We hold civic education seminars for rural people, especially farmers, as part of campaigns to raise public awareness about environmental issues. If you were to ask a hundred farmers how many of them remember a spring or a stream that has dried up in their lifetime, almost 30 of them would raise their hands.

What has your Green Belt Movement (GBM) achieved and in particular to what extent has it prevented environmental degradation in Kenya?

The most notable achievement of the GBM in my view has been in raising environmental awareness among ordinary citizens, especially rural people. Different groups of people now realize that the environment is a concern for everybody and not simply a concern for the government. It is partly because of this awareness that we are now able to reach out to decision-makers in the government. Ordinary citizens are challenging them to protect the environment.

Secondly, the GBM introduced the idea of environmental conservation through trees because trees meet many basic needs of rural communities. We started out by planting seven trees in a small park in Nairobi in 1977. At that time we had no tree nursery, no staff and no funds, only a conviction that ordinary country people had a role to play in solving environmental problems. We went on from there and now we have planted over 20 million trees all over Kenya.

The act of planting trees conveys a simple message. It suggests that at the very least you can plant a tree and improve your habitat. It increases people's awareness that they can take control of their environment, which is the first step toward greater participation in society. Since the trees we have planted are visible, they are the greatest ambassadors for our movement.

Despite the Rio Earth Summit of 1992 and the Kyoto Climate summit in 1997, there has been no significant progress in environmental protection programmes and campaigns at a global level. Why?

Unfortunately, for many world leaders development still means extensive farming of cash crops, expensive hydroelectric dams, hotels, supermarkets, and luxury items, which plunder human and natural resources. This is short-sighted and does not meet people's basic needs—for adequate food, clean water, shelter, local clinics, information and freedom.

As a result of this craze for so-called development, environmental protection has taken a back seat. The problem is that the people who are responsible for much of the destruction of the environment are precisely those who should be providing leadership in environmental protection campaigns. But they are not doing so.

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Also, political power now is wielded by those who have business interests and close links with multinational corporations (MNCs). The only aim of these MNCs is to make profit at the expense of the environment and people.

We also know that many world political leaders are persuaded by MNCs not to pay attention to declarations made in international environmental conferences. I strongly believe that as citizens we should refuse to be at the mercy of these corporations. Corporations can be extremely merciless, as they have no human face.

You started your career as an academic. Later you became an environmentalist, and now you are called a pro-democracy activist. How would you describe your evolution in the last 25 years?

Few environmentalists today are worried about the welfare of bees, butterflies and trees alone. They know that it is not possible to keep the environment pure if you have a government that does not control polluting industries and deforestation.

In Kenya, for example, real estate developers have been allowed to go into the middle of indigenous forests and build expensive houses. As concerned individuals we should oppose that. When you start intervening at that level, you find yourself in direct confrontation with policy-makers and you start to be called an activist.

I was teaching at the University of Nairobi in the 1970s, when I felt that the academic rights of women professors were not being respected because they were women. I became an activist at the university, insisting that I wanted my rights as an academic.

Meanwhile, I found myself confronted by other issues that were directly related ▶

A 20-MILLION-TREE GREEN BELT

In a country where women play a marginal role in political and social affairs, 59-year-old Wangari Muta Maathai's achievements stand out as an exception. A biologist, she was the first woman from East Africa to receive a doctorate, to become a professor and chair a department–all at the University of Nairobi.

Maathai began to be active in the National Council of Women of Kenya in 1976 and it was through the Council that she launched a tree-planting project called "Save the Land *Harambee*" (a Swahili word meaning let's all pull together). The project was renamed the Green Belt Movement (GBM) in 1977.

The GBM initiated programmes to promote and protect biodiversity, to protect the soil, to create jobs especially in rural areas, to give women a positive image in the community and to assert their leadership qualities.

The overall aim of the GBM has been to create public awareness of the need to protect the environment through tree planting and sustainable management. Nearly 80 per cent of the 20 million trees planted by the GBM have survived. At present the GBM has over 3,000 nurseries, giving job opportunities to about 80,000 people, most of them rural women.

In 1986 the GBM established a Pan-African Green Belt Network and has organized workshops and training programmes on environmental awareness for scores of individuals from other African countries. This has led to the adoption of Green Belt methods in Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Lesotho, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe.

Maathai, who is a member of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament, has won 14 international awards, including the prestigious Right Livelihood Award. She won the award, presented by a Swedish foundation and often referred to as an Alternative Nobel Prize, in recognition of her "contributions to the well-being of humankind".

In a country where single-party rule prevailed for decades, Maathai has been teargassed and severely beaten by police during demonstrations to protect Kenya's forests.

"The government thinks that by threatening me and bashing me they can silence me," says Maathai. "But I have an elephant's skin. And somebody must raise their voice."

Maathai, a mother of three children, is currently involved in a struggle to save the 2,500-acre Karura forests, northwest of Nairobi, where the government wants to build housing complexes. ■

to my work but were not clear to me at the outset, like human rights. This directly led me to another area, governance. As a result I was drafted into the pro-democracy campaign.

I realized in the 1970s that in a young democracy like ours it was very easy for leaders to become dictators. As this happened they started using national resources as though they were their personal property. I realized that the constitution had given them powers to misuse official machinery.

So I became involved in the pro-democracy movement and pressed for constitutional reforms and political space to ensure freedom of thought and expression. We cannot live with a political system that kills creativity and produces cowardly people.

'At one time Members of Parliament accused me and ridiculed me for being a divorced woman. I have felt that deep inside they were hoping that by calling into question my womanhood I would be subdued. Later they realized they were wrong'

With your academic qualifications you could have lived a comfortable life in the U.S. or elsewhere in the West. But you decided to come back and settle down in Kenya. In the last 25 years, you have been verbally abused, threatened, beaten, put behind bars and on many occasions forbidden to leave the country. Have you ever regretted returning to Kenya and becoming an activist?

I did not deliberately decide to become an activist, but I have never regretted the fact that I decided to stay here and to contribute to the development of this country and my region. I know that I have made a little difference.

Many people come up to me and tell me that my work has inspired them. This gives me great satisfaction because in the earlier days, especially during the dictatorship, it was difficult to speak.

Until a few years ago, people used to come up to me in the street and whisper "I am with you and I am praying for you." They were so scared of being identified with me that they did not want to be heard. I know a lot of people were afraid of talking to me and being seen with me because they might be punished.

I have been a greater positive force by staying here and going through trials and tribulations than if I had gone to other countries. It would have been very different to live in the West and say my country should do this and that. By being here I encourage many more people.

Do you think you were subjected to virulent attacks and abuses because you questioned men's decisions?

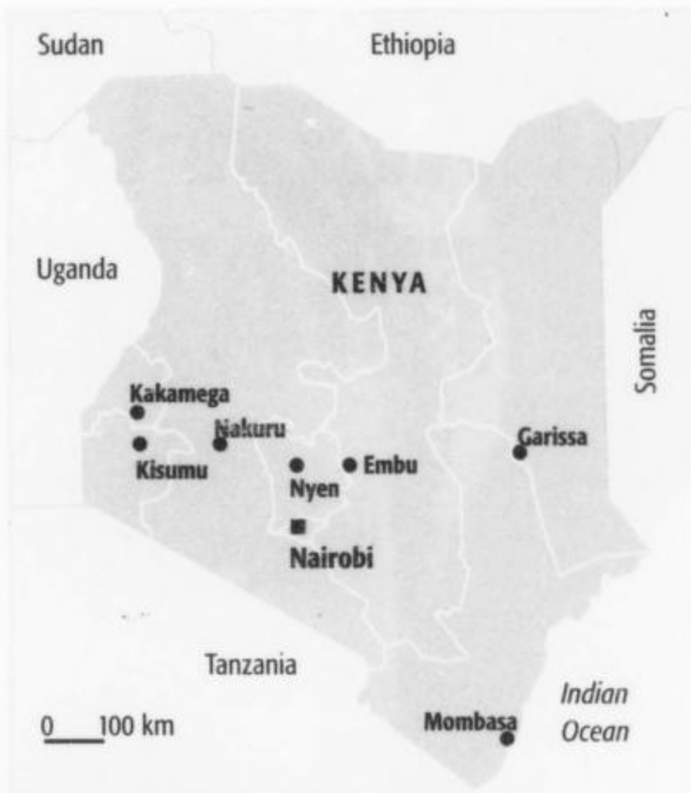
Our men think African women should be dependent and submissive, definitely not better than their husbands. There is no doubt that at first many people opposed me because I am a woman and resented the idea that I had strong opinions.

I know that at times men in positions of influence, including President Daniel Arap Moi, ridiculed me. At one time Members of Parliament accused me and ridiculed me for being a divorced woman. I have felt that deep inside they were hoping that by calling into question my womanhood I would be subdued. Later they realized they were wrong.

In 1989, for example, we had a big confrontation with the authorities when we were fighting to save Uhuru Park in Nairobi. I argued that it would be ridiculous to destroy this beautiful park in the centre of the city and replace it with a multi-storeyed complex.

Uhuru Park was the only place in Nairobi where people could spend time with their families outdoors. The park was a wonderful place for people to go because it was a place where no one bothered them.

When I launched the campaign opposing the construction of the "Parkmonster", as the project later came to be known, I was ridiculed and accused of not understanding development. I didn't study development but I do know that you need space in a city. Fortunately



KENYA FACTFILE

Republic of Kenya (Jamhuri ya Kenya)
A former British colony, gained independence in 1963 and became a republic the following year.
Area: 582,646 sq.km
Capital: Nairobi
Population: 28.4 million
Languages: Kiswahili, English
Life expectancy at birth: 52 years
Adult literacy rate: 79.3 %
GDP per capita: $372
President: Daniel T. Arap Moi
Monetary Unit: Kenya Shilling
(74 shillings=$1 US)

Source : UNDP Human Development Report 1999

In Madagascar, a woman plants rice in the ashes of a felled area of forest, home to the last survivors of a lemur species.

© Paul Harrison/Still Pictures, London

© William Campbell/Still Pictures, London

A member of Kenya's Green Belt movement.

other non-governmental organizations and thousands of ordinary people joined our protests and finally the park was saved.

The government, which wanted to destroy that park, has since declared it a national heritage. That's wonderful. They could have done that without fighting and without ridiculing me.

What made you stand in the presidential elections in 1997? Despite your popularity, why didn't you win a sizeable number of votes?

I decided to stand for election for several reasons. In 1992, when a multi-party system was legalized in Kenya for the first time, I tried very hard with other political groups to unite the opposition, but in vain. When there were many opposition candidates running for the presidency, I withdrew from the campaign.

As expected, the opposition lost those elections and everybody now accepts that the campaign we launched for them to unite was right. We wanted to form a government of national unity within the opposition in 1992. This is exactly what they are now clamouring for. ▶

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In the 1997 general elections, my idea was to persuade the opposition to unite and field a strong candidate from one ethnic community against the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU).[1] But I was called a tribalist by some opposition groups for proposing that idea. When all my efforts to unite the opposition failed, I decided to run for president.

But during the campaign I also came to realize that in this country it is very difficult to get elected without money. I didn't have money. I realized that it doesn't matter how good you are, how honest you are and how pro-democratic you are, if you don't have money to give to the voter you won't get elected. So I lost.

All this gave me a new experience. Now I can speak as an insider. I also realized that people here are not yet ready for democracy and we need a lot of civic education and political consciousness. People here are still controlled by ethnicity and vote along ethnic lines. The ethnic question became a very important issue during the last elections.

Despite having enormous natural resources Africa still lags behind other continents in terms of development and growth. Why is this?

Poor leadership, without any doubt. This generation of African leaders will go down in history as a very irresponsible one that has brought Africa to its knees. During the past three decades, Africa has suffered from a lack of visionary and altruistic leaders committed to the welfare of their people.

1. The Kenya African National Union (KANU) was formed in 1960, won the country's first post-independence election in 1963, and has been in power ever since.

'This generation of African leaders will go down in history as a very irresponsible one that has brought Africa to its knees. During the past three decades, Africa has suffered from a lack of visionary and altruistic leaders committed to the welfare of their people'

There are historical reasons for this. Just before independence was granted to many African countries, young Africans were promoted by colonial rulers to positions until then unoccupied by the local people and were trained to take over power from the colonial administration.

The new black administrators and burgeoning elites enjoyed the same economic and social life-styles and privileges that the imperial administrators enjoyed. The only difference between the two in terms of the objectives for the country was the colour of their skin.

In the process, the African leaders abandoned their people, and in order to maintain their hold on power they did exactly what the colonial system was doing, namely to pit one community against another. This internal conflict continued for decades in many African countries, draining their scarce resources.

So what we need is to improve our leadership. If we don't there is no hope, because history teaches us that if you cannot protect what is your own somebody will come and take it. If our people cannot protect themselves they will continue to be exploited. Their resources will continue to be exploited.

It is also true that Western powers, especially the former colonial masters of this region, have continued to exploit Africa and have continued to work very closely with these dictators and irresponsible leaders. That is why we are now deep in debt, which we cannot repay.

Africa also needs assistance from international governments to improve its economic standing. For example, most foreign aid to Africa comes in the form of curative social welfare programmes such as famine relief, food aid, population control programmes, refugee camps, peace-keeping forces and humanitarian missions.

At the same time, hardly any resources are available for sustainable human development programmes such as functional education and training, development of infrastructure, food production and promotion of entrepreneurship. There are no funds for the development of cultural and social programmes which would empower people and release their creative energy.

I am hoping that in the new millennium a new leadership will emerge in Africa, and I hope this new leadership will show more concern for the people and utilize the continent's resources to help Africans get out of poverty. ■

Interview by Ethirajan Anbarasan,
UNESCO Courier journalist

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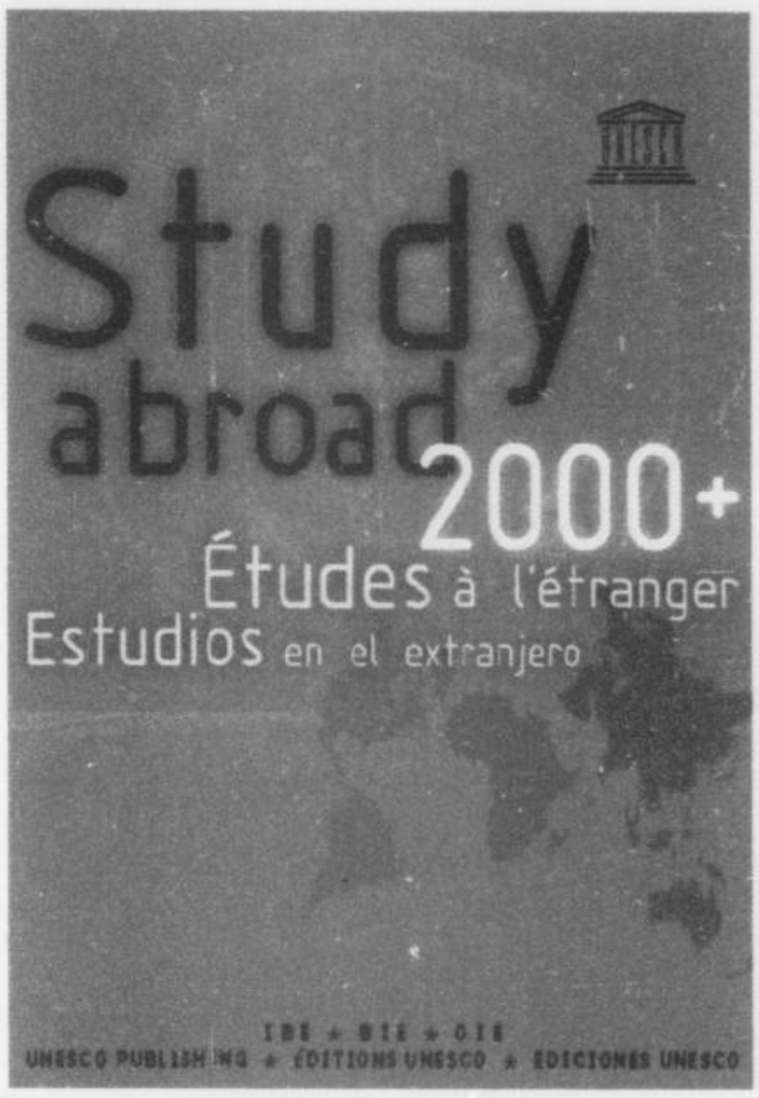

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